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An Alignment Analysis of the U.S. Navy Supply Corps Officer's Career Guidance With Naval Supply Systems Command's Strategic Publications

3 June 2014

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Abstract

The U.S. Navy Supply Corps officer community's professional development guidance does not solidly link to the organization's strategic vision, goals, or objectives. This study qualitatively analyzes the degree of alignment between officer development guidance and strategic initiatives. It evaluates two sets of documents: near-, mid-, and long-term strategy and individual career guidance playbooks. As Supply Corps officers progress through military service, career milestones do not reflect the radical shift in corporate culture needed by Naval Supply Systems Command (NAVSUP) to better serve U.S. Navy customers. This research examines two constructs that bind employees to organizational strategy: performance management and employee engagement. The study recommends adopting industry-standardized professional certification programs to validate functional knowledge, skills, abilities, and competencies to provide (1) a metric for measuring progress toward strategic initiatives and (2) an incentive for attaining and maintaining functional competency in the U.S. Navy Supply Corps. Professional certification benefits the individual through validated knowledge and association with industry-recognized professional organizations. More importantly, the organization benefits in formalizing its relationship with external organizations (through its officers), gains the credibility needed for contributing when in partnership with Joint Naval Support Network partners, and provides a metric by which NAVSUP can measure its progress toward strategic goals.

Keywords: strategic human resources management, organizational strategy, employee engagement, performance management, performance measurement systems, logistics, NAVSUPSYSCOM, Naval Supply Systems Command, professional development, acquisition workforce

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About the Author

LT Jarrod Smith is a U.S. Navy Supply Corps officer. He was commissioned through the U.S. Naval Officer Candidate School at NAS Pensacola, FL. After commissioning, he attended Naval Submarine School and upon completion, reported to USS *City of Corpus Christi* (SSN 705) stationed at Apra Harbor, Guam. His second tour was as supply officer for Maritime Civil Affairs Squadron Two stationed at Yorktown, VA. After the civil affairs experience, he served as an Individual Augmentee with U.S. Forces–Afghanistan (South) at Kandahar Air Field, Kandahar Province. Afterwards, he reported to USS *George H. W. Bush* (CVN 77), where he served as wardroom/hotel services division officer and materiel division officer during the ship's first workup and deployment cycle. LT Smith is married to his wife, Jenny, and they have three children, Trenton, Charlotte, and Evelyn. After graduation from the Naval Postgraduate School, he reports to Naval Supply Systems Command's Business Systems Center in Mechanicsburg, PA.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

APICS   Association for Operations Management

AQD   additional qualification designators

CDFM   Certified Defense Financial Manager

CG   commander's guidance

CG/14   *Commander's Guidance/2014*

CG13   *Commander's Guidance 2013*

CNO   chief of naval operations

COOL   Navy Credentialing Opportunities Online

DAWIA   Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act

EE   employee engagement

FMMTC   Financial and Material Management Training Course

GAO   General Accounting Office (pre-2004)

KSA   knowledge, skills, abilities

KSAC   knowledge, skills, abilities, and competencies

IYC   *It's Your Career* playbook series

MS   Microsoft

MSC   U.S. Navy Medical Service Corps

NAVSUP   Naval Supply Systems Command

NOBC   naval officer billet classifications

PM   performance management

PMS   performance measurement system

SHRM   strategic human resource management

SP   *Strategic Plan 2013–2017*

SVS   *Supply Corps 2040 Strategic Vision Study*

TWI   Training with Industry

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I. PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

Naval Supply Systems Command's (NAVSUP's) 1989 *Supply Corps 2010 Strategic Vision Study* (1989), as cited in NAVSUP's 2010 *Supply Corps 2040 Strategic Vision Study* (*SVS*), stated that U.S. Navy medicine could benefit from U.S. Navy Supply Corps "business management expertise" (p. 33) in the overlapping functional areas such as inventory management. The U.S. Navy Medical Service Corps (MSC) did not embrace the 1989 recommendation, resulting in limited Supply Corps presence at U.S. Navy medical commands today (NAVSUP, 2010, p. 33). The study in 1989 (1) proposed increasing Supply Corps staffing in key supply positions assigned to the MSC community and (2) recommended conversion of junior MSC officer billets in material management and medical equipment management to Supply Corps officer billets (NAVSUP, 2010, p. 33). Neither of these proposals became reality (NAVSUP, 2010, p. 33).

A. PURPOSE

NAVSUP's *Commander's Guidance/2014* (*CG/14*) directs "every member of the NAVSUPSYSCOM and Supply Corps team to examine everything we do in a new light" (NAVSUP, 2014b, p. 9). This research examines the U.S. Navy Supply Corps officer development model to determine how well the professional development process aligns with and supports NAVSUP's long-term strategy for officer development. It also provides insight into why the MSC did not entertain U.S. Navy Supply Corps officer services within its medical logistics enterprise. This research effort follows *CG/14* (NAVSUP, 2014b).

1. Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative study is to analyze how well the *It's Your Career* (*IYC*; Office of Supply Corps Personnel [OSCP], 2011a) playbook series supports NAVSUP's strategic publications: *Commander's Guidance 2013* (*CG13*)*, Strategic Plan 2013–2017* (*SP*), and *SVS*. This publication assessment and exploratory thematic analysis documents gaps between the community's strategic publications and *IYC* playbooks.

- This work examines U.S. Navy Supply Corps officer career development guidance. Three playbooks undergo an exploratory thematic analysis to determine the incentives woven into individual professional development for career progress. The playbooks *It's Your Career* (OSCP, 2011a), *It's Your Experience* (OSCP, 2011c), and *It's Your Education* (OSCP, 2011b) are analyzed individually and as pairs.

- The NAVSUP organizational strategy concerning officer development receives an exploratory thematic analysis to determine what comprises the organization's near-, mid-, and long-term strategy for the career path of Supply Corps officers. NAVSUP's *CG13* (2013a), *SP* (2013b), and *SVS* (2010) provide the U.S. Navy Supply Corps officer with general guidance and direction for aligning individual actions with organizational initiatives.

- Using thematic analysis results from individual development guidance (*IYC* playbooks) and organizational strategy (NAVSUP strategic publications) determines how well individual guidance aligns with organizational strategy. The researcher then provides recommendations to increase individual contributions to organizational strategy.

The goals of this research are to

offer a unique perspective of the current development model;

propose enhancements to the current development model; and

incentivize U.S. Navy Supply Corps officers through an improved development model in order to

    a.   maintain familiarity with strategy,

    b.   support strategy through achievement of professional competency, and

    c.   promote achievement of strategic goals within the individual officer's sphere of influence by encouraging competency validation at all ranks.

2. Problem Statement

NAVSUP organizational needs are changing. The U.S. Navy Supply Corps individual career guidance lacks the necessary metrics and guidance to ensure that members change with organizational requirements. The status quo lacks necessary incentives for officers, particularly the leadership of the year 2040 (today's junior officers), to meaningfully contribute to organizational strategy early in their careers. Changes to the career development model can positively affect individuals, the organization, and our ability to accomplish strategic objectives and achieve strategic goals.

For U.S. Navy Supply Corps officers to execute the commander's annual guidance, through which NAVSUP's *SP* (NAVSUP, 2013b) and *SVS* (NAVSUP, 2010) are realized, modifications to *IYC* (OSCP, 2011a) playbooks are necessary. Supply Corps officers can help implement the 2040 strategic vision through the

execution of yearly and quadrennial strategic guidance. However, in order to do so, Supply Corps officers at all ranks and levels of the organization must be familiar with the strategic guidance to enable individual contribution toward the organization's strategic effort. *IYC* is missing incentives to support and motivate individual officers to maintain familiarity with strategic guidance or its supporting objectives. *IYC* does not identify opportunities or incentivize actions complementary to strategic initiatives, nor does it contain metrics for gauging community progress toward strategic goals and underlying objectives.

3.   Contribution

This research adds an example to the strategic human resources management body of knowledge concerning how to align people with their organization's strategy. This work analyzes a real organization that is facing tremendous pressures and organizational challenges.

NAVSUP has allocated extensive effort and considerable resources to establish a long-view strategy and to blend that vision with the current year's focus areas. The research identifies weaknesses in the strategic link to the organization's officer development system and recommends areas to improve model alignment with organizational strategy. This effort identifies gaps in the U.S. Navy Supply Corps officer development process, provides recommendations that support the organization's strategy while closing these development gaps, and charts a path for implementing better solutions throughout the officer development system.

For the active-duty audience for whom the researcher writes, this report provides an internal look at the organization's officer development model from one middle-level officer's perspective. The research assesses how well the individual development model supports organizational strategy. It provides thought-provoking ideas to engage the entire U.S. Navy Supply Corps community of officers with the organization's strategic initiatives. It asks for proactive engagement of junior officers concerning organizational initiatives as the community continues further into the joint, combined, and interagency environment. It challenges the "jack of all trades, master of none" mentality prevalent in the officer ranks and recommends knowledge, skills, abilities, and competencies (KSACs) that can be mastered, validated, and applied across functional areas within the various lines of operation in which U.S. Navy Supply Corps officers frequently work.

- *Strategic Plan 2013–2017*

The organization has completed 25% of the strategic planning cycle, and metrics are needed to discern how well the organization is meeting strategic goals. These goals provide many opportunities for individual officers to pursue; however, there is little guidance on how exactly individuals can contribute to achieving

organizational strategy and be rewarded for their efforts. Three years remain before the strategic plan is revised. The organization must be able to determine which goals were met and the reasons behind that success. This research supports measuring the organization's strategic effort by slightly modifying and using the U.S. Navy Supply Corps officer development process to support organizational strategy.

- *Commander's Guidance 2013*

This work directly contributes to NAVSUP's (2013a) *CG13* Strategic Objective 1.3 (which closely resembles *CG/14* [NAVSUP, 2014b] Strategic Objectives 2.1 and 2.4):

> Development of competency/functional and leadership based training and development tracts and implement as part of employee Individual Development Plans (IDPs) for both civilian and military personnel. This includes identifying all required skill sets as well as professional certifications (DAWIA, CDFM, etc.). (NAVSUP, 2013a, p. 4)

This research effort also contributes to NAVSUP's (2013a) *CG13* Strategic Objective 1.5, which closely resembles the "challenge to examine everything we do in a new light" (NAVSUP, 2014b, p. 9) directive contained within *CG/14* (NAVSUP, 2014b): "Incentivize and reward ideas and behaviors that drive innovative solutions and support continuous process improvement" (NAVSUP, 2013a, p. 5).

4.   A Corps of Officers

Considering that a very small percentage of U.S. Navy Supply Corps officers obtain the rank of captain (O6), let alone that of rear admiral—lower half or higher—it is just as, if not more, important that the larger community of officers from the ranks of ensign (O1) through commander (O5) actively participate in the organization's strategic effort. The validation and maintenance of KSACs at these ranks can support achieving strategic objectives and measure the progress made toward strategic goals, as well as provide important information regarding goals not attained.

5.   The Joint, Combined, and Interagency Environment

The process discussed herein is that of individual officer development as it pertains to U.S. Navy Supply Corps officers' professional competency and relevance in a competitive environment (the joint, combined, and interagency environment). In the joint arena that all military branches will continue experiencing, it is important that the U.S. Navy Supply Corps admirals of the year 2040 (today's junior officers) be aware of their environment and continually contribute to the organization's strategic effort. Additionally, interaction with the Joint Naval Support Network partners, defined in *CG/14* (NAVSUP, 2014b), necessitates that U.S. Navy Supply

Corps officers approach these interactions with the credentials to bring professional value to professional discussions, such as business process improvement.

6. Strategic Guidance and Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, and Competencies

NAVSUP's (2014a) *Charting Our Course*, a precursor to *CG/14* (NAVSUP, 2014b), outlines 12 broad focus areas that underscore the importance of this research work. The focus areas generally outline *CG/14* (NAVSUP, 2014b) and include the following:

> 1) Build and maintain an environment of sound judgment and integrity …, 2) Develop a comprehensive strategy that attracts, develops and retains a … professional workforce, 3) Conduct an in-depth assessment of our ability to flex our support and supply chains with the Naval Support Network …, 4) Partner with other provider enterprises …, 5) Develop a strategy to ensure the Naval Support Network is providing the appropriate level of support …, 6) Partnering with internal and external stakeholders; develop a process to systematically validate logistical and financial processes …, 7) Develop strategies … to identify solutions to improve quality-of-life services …, 8) Partnering with internal and external stakeholders, review existing contracting and husbanding support processes …, 9) Conduct an in-depth assessment of our ability to support Navy's requirements in a fiscally constrained environment and develop strategies to address shortcomings, 10) Develop a business strategy to identify opportunities to drive cost out of business lines and assess how NAVSUP will manage costs in the future, 11) Accelerate sustainment planning for leveraging Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) to reduce costs across Navy's supply chains, and 12) Establish a center of excellence for metrics development, collection and reporting, leveraging ERP data and standardizing methodologies. (pp. 12–21)

Each of these focus areas requires validated KSACs that empower individual officers to assist the organization in pursuing focus area objectives and reaching strategic goals.

7. Driving Change, Reducing Costs, and the Enduring Development Model

To drive change in processes and perform business less expensively yet more effectively, officers require the appropriate KSACs while assigned to the appropriate job at the right time during a career. "Throwing officers in the deep end," an element of the officer development model (described in *SVS* [NAVSUP, 2010]), is a counterproductive approach for driving less expensive business operations, for preventing ethical failures, and for achieving the annually changing commander's

guidance objectives that support strategic focus areas. This research links the pursuit of strategic objectives with the officer development process.

B.   RESEARCH

1.   Primary Research Question

- Do U.S. Navy Supply Corps *IYC* playbooks support and align with NAVSUP's *CG13, SP*, and *SVS*?

2.   Supporting Research Questions

- How does *IYC* guidance contribute to strategic goals?

- To what degree are the activities outlined in *IYC* guidance aligned with strategic objectives?

- How does *IYC* motivate officers to pursue KSACs that support a fundamental shift in corporate culture being sought through the strategic goals and supporting objectives?

C.   SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

This research compares officer career guidance with organizational strategy. The *IYC* playbooks are analyzed individually and then compared against each other to determine how well each aligns with the others. Strategic publications are analyzed individually and then compared against each other. Finally, two groups of documents (officer guidance and organizational strategy) are analyzed, findings reported, limits documented, recommendations provided, and ideas for further research given.

1.   Scope

The scope for this research effort encompasses the U.S. Navy Supply Corps officer professional development system and the NAVSUP strategic guidance documents.

a.   Officer Development

The *IYC* playbook series advises what a U.S. Navy Supply Corps officer "must be familiar with to succeed" (OSCP, 2011a, p. 1) in the U.S. Navy Supply Corps. The series contains six playbooks, of which three are analyzed for this research: *It's Your Career* (OSCP, 2011a), the first of the six playbooks, summarizes the remaining five playbooks and provides broad, general guidance; *It's Your Experience* (OSCP, 2011c), a more detailed playbook, discusses specifics concerning assignments and organizational affiliation; and *It's Your Education* (OSCP, 2011b) discusses the academic opportunities and requirements for U.S.

Navy Supply Corps officers. Three remaining playbooks complete the series (*It's Your Record*, *It's Your Detail*, and *It's Your Board*) but are outside the scope of this research because each concerns administrative requirements and guidance vaguely related to professional development.

b.   Organizational Strategy

NAVSUP distributes organizational strategy via three publications distributed at differing time intervals. *SVS* (NAVSUP, 2010) is the second far-sighted study completed by the U.S. Navy Supply Corps (the first was *Supply Corps 2010 Strategic Vision Study*, published in 1989) in an effort to identify what officers three decades ahead should know and be able to do. Released in 2010, *SVS* provides a path for the U.S. Navy Supply Corps to follow through the year 2040.

SP (NAVSUP, 2013b) is a quadrennial strategy document based on the chief of naval operations' (CNO's) *Navigation Plan* and relays the CNO's guidance to all NAVSUP employees concerning the organization's mid-term focus (four years) to support the CNO's strategy. Contained within the NAVSUP plan are strategic goals that the organization is to pursue and achieve during this quadrennial time frame.

NAVSUP's commander's guidance (CG) is an annual publication released from a dual position filled by one rear admiral—upper half, the chief of the U.S. Navy Supply Corps and commander, NAVSUP—that details specific objectives and actionable items that the organization must achieve in order to reach the goals outlined in *SP*. At the time of this research, *CG13* was available and used for the exploratory thematic analysis. In late March 2014, *CG/14* was released and, due to time constraints on the researcher, is not analyzed in this research. However, *CG/14* is used for background and context, as seen at the beginning of this chapter. Mentioning the most current CG further supports the arguments made and keeps the research effort as up to date as possible.

2.   Methodology

An exploratory thematic analysis is used to analyze two groups of documents. Two analyses are performed on each group, as depicted in Figure 1. The first analysis is defined as a *within* analysis of each document group consisting of three *IYC* series playbooks (the "*IYC* group") and three strategy documents (the "strategy group") highlighted by in Figure 1. The second analytical effort is defined as an *across* analysis within each document group, as highlighted by in Figure 1.

Figure 1.   Within and Between Analysis of Each *IYC* and Strategy Document Group
(Adapted from Navy Personnel Command [NPC], 2011a, 2011b, 2011c, 2011d; NAVSUP, 2010, 2013a, 2013b)

Finally, an across analysis, as depicted in Figure 2, compares individual guidance with organizational strategy to determine the degree of alignment that *IYC* has with near-, mid-, and long-term strategic guidance. All exploratory thematic analysis coding efforts originate from techniques described in Hahn (2008).
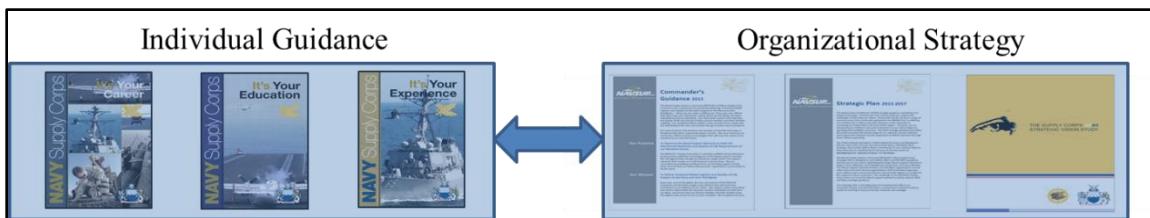
Figure 2.   Between Analysis of *IYC* and Strategy Documents
(Adapted from NPC, 2011b, 2011c, 2011d; NAVSUP, 2010, 2013a, 2013b)

a.   Alignment Analysis Within Individual Career Guidance (IYC Playbooks)

An exploratory thematic analysis of three *IYC* playbooks concerning officer professional development provides Level 1 and Level 2 thematic codes originating from within each document. *It's Your Career* (OSCP, 2011a) advises broad guidance and outlines how the remaining playbooks fit into the career

progression and development model. *It's Your Experience* (OSCP, 2011c) guides officers concerning the experiences and affiliations they should consider during their service. *It's Your Education* (OSCP, 2011b) outlines the necessary academic experiences required for success in the U.S. Navy Supply Corps. The analysis within each playbook determines what the guidance advises individual officers to do "in order to succeed" (OSCP, 2011a), independent of the other playbooks. The three playbooks are then compared across one another to determine how well they complement and align with each other, as depicted with the blue arrows in the top half (individual guidance) of Figure 1. No thematic analysis is performed on *It's Your Record*, *It's Your Detail,* or *It's Your Board*, which are the remaining *IYC* playbooks not coded during this research for reasons previously mentioned.

b. Alignment Analysis Within Organizational Strategic Guidance

An exploratory thematic analysis of *SVS* (NAVSUP, 2010) was accomplished for applicable elements of the document. Applicable elements include the document's Introduction, Background (Chapters 1, 2, and 3, and all four of the A Day in the Life of a Supply Corps Officer segments), the Strategy Model (NSPP) for Officer Development and Summary in Chapter 5, Assumptions from Chapter 6, Ashore Demand from Chapter 8, Joint Logistics Officer Development from Chapter 9, the entirety of Chapter 10 (Officer Development), the Officer Development Strategic Focus area of Chapter 11, and Summary from Chapter 12. The knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required in the year 2040, as defined by *SVS* (NAVSUP, 2010), are categorized into higher level codes and are of particular importance to this research. NAVSUP's (2013b) *SP* is analyzed using the same thematic analysis techniques and allows for determining how well *SP* aligns with and supports *SVS*.

NAVSUP's (2013a) *CG13* is coded using exploratory thematic analysis techniques as accomplished for all other data. The analysis determines how well *CG13* aligns with and supports both *SP* (NAVSUP, 2013b) and *SVS* (NAVSUP, 2010). All three strategic documents are then compared to determine how well they complement and align with each other across the document group, as depicted by the blue arrows in the bottom half (strategy group) of Figure 1.

As previously mentioned, NAVSUP's (2014b) *CG/14* is not analyzed using thematic analysis techniques or compared with *SP* or *SVS*. The timing of the analysis, combined with the researcher's deadlines for this research and other academic obligations, prevented a thematic analysis and determination of results concerning *CG/14*.

c. Alignment Analysis—Individual Career Guidance With Strategic Guidance

An overarching analysis determines the alignment that *IYC* playbooks have with *CG13* and *SVS*. The degree of support is determined using the within and across analysis of each document group (*IYC* and strategy). Note that *SP* (NAVSUP, 2013b) is very similar to *CG13* (NAVSUP, 2013a); therefore, additional analysis of *SP* (in addition to *CG13*) is not included in this report. The analysis is conducted using Level 3 codes generated from the Level 1 and Level 2 coding effort. The degree of support that individual career guidance has for the organization's strategic goals is determined and gaps between the publications are identified.

d. Literature Review

Strategic human resources management is used to address any misalignment between individual officer professional development and the organization's strategic objectives, strategic goals, and multi-decade vision. Two constructs, employee engagement and performance management systems, are discussed. These areas allow for informed recommendations to bridge the gaps identified in the analysis. The researcher utilizes review papers that discuss employee engagement and performance management, as related to the individuals' contribution toward organizational strategy.

D. ORGANIZATION OF STUDY

- Chapter I: PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

- Chapter II: LITERATURE REVIEW

- Chapter III: METHODOLOGY: EXPLORATORY THEMATIC ANALYSIS

- Chapter IV: DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

- Chapter V: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. INTRODUCTION

A short discussion concerning similar research efforts within and outside of NAVSUP begins the review. Literature from the strategic human resources management body of knowledge is then discussed; specifically, the constructs of employee engagement (EE) and performance management (PM) are introduced. EE, as it relates to organizational strategy, can capture an individual officer's interest in the organization's strategic initiative. Complementing EE, business success and the relevance of strategic communications are considered. A discussion on PM considers competency validation, using enterprise-wide metrics to gauge individual performance, and linking individuals with strategy through their job.

1. Functional Area Development for Military Officers

Almost no current research exists on the subject of U.S. Navy Supply Corps officer development and career advancement. Gerhardt (1949) and Giuli (1950) conducted research using surveys concerning U.S. Navy Supply Corps officer development more than 60 years ago. Outlaw (1975) performed an analysis of the *Navy Supply Corps Newsletter* concerning the publication's means for information transfer, which indirectly relates to organizational communications and individual development, advertising what the organization viewed as important for career progress at that time.

Other military practitioners in varying occupations have conducted studies of their organizations' professional development. Barber (2003) conducted a community assessment and action plan of the U.S. Navy Human Resources officer community by conducting a thorough review of civilian human resource management and development and comparing it with U.S. Navy Human Resources initiatives at the time. Aragon (2005) discussed personnel qualifications for Information Professional officers and provided insight into their career development requirements. Borrelli (2008) discussed the use of the U.S. Navy's financial management subspecialty coded officers across all warfare lines and staff corps.

Higgins and Wahlgren (2011) completed a thorough study in which they briefly touched on aligning NAVSUP Human Resources practices to the organizational change process, but they did not specifically study the individual U.S. Navy Supply Corps officer development model or how development is linked to the organization's strategic goals. They noted, "It is unclear from the documents reviewed that NAVSUP currently utilizes the enterprise change vision as the basis for hiring, retaining or promoting its personnel" (Higgins & Wahlgren, 2011, p. 94). Higgins and Wahlgren (2011) concluded,

The area of inconsistency with how NAVSUP utilizes its human resource practices is seen at the group or individual level for sustaining the momentum of change implementation. Human resource practices, such as changing appraisals to include employee adoption of or resistance to the enterprise concepts and properly awarding employees for achievement of enterprise objectives have not been sufficiently addressed. In order to ensure lasting change has been accomplished, such measures should be adopted to award new work behaviors and outcomes which are aligned with change initiatives. (Higgins & Wahlgren, 2011, p. 109)

Additionally, Pederson (2009) examined the U.S. Navy training officer career path, looking at the professional development mechanisms of formal training and its relationship to on-the-job training. Lastly, Rauschelbach (2013) assessed the U.S. Marine Corps mentorship program and discussed its relation to their officer development and career progress.

No research efforts by mid-level U.S. Navy Supply Corps officers were found concerning *Supply Corps 2010 Strategic Vision Study*, published in 1989. This research is the first formal U.S. Navy Supply Corps officer development analysis by a junior officer directly centered on the career development model for the organization and how that model supports NAVSUP strategic goals and objectives. No studies were found concerning the U.S. Navy Supply Corps officer's contribution toward organizational strategy, and no similar study has been performed by a mid-level U.S. Navy Supply Corps officer looking internally at the development model.

2. Strategic Human Resources Management

Schuler and Jackson (1999) described the general conceptualization of strategic human resource management (SHRM) as "systematically linking people with the organization, where all internal aspects (structure, culture, vision, mission, values, strategies, products, and technology) and external aspects (customers, competitors, regulators, employees, investors, and suppliers) of the firm are considered" (p. xviii). Two constructs, EE and PM, are drawn from the external aspect of SHRM knowledge and discussed as these SHRM elements relate to the internal aspect of organizational strategy (Schuler & Jackson, 1999). These constructs relate to an employee's connection to strategic goals and the supporting objectives.

B. EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

1. An Emerging Definition

Lockwood (2007) defined EE as "the extent to which employees commit to something, or someone, in their organization, how hard they work, and how long

they stay as a result of that commitment" (p. 2). In a review of four scholarly frameworks, Shuck (2011) pulled from the SHRM literature defining EE to be "an individual employee's cognitive, emotional, and behavioral state directed toward desired organizational outcomes" (p. 305). One of these frameworks, a multi-dimensional approach for EE introduced by Saks (2006), is defined "as a distinct and unique construct consisting of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral components associated with individual role performance" (Saks, 2006, p. 602). In this approach, separate states of engagement—job and organizational—exist (Shuck, 2011, p. 313).

Preceding the aforementioned effort, Shuck and Wollard (2009) explored the development of EE through a historical lens and provided a working definition of the phrase. They argued convincingly that EE is not about the masses who occupy the organization but, rather, the individual (Shuck & Wollard, 2009). Synthesizing multiple definitions, Shuck and Wollard (2009) concluded that "it is personal, different types exist (cognitive, emotional, and behavioral), and engagement is measured behaviorally" (pp. 137–138).

Hence, Shuck and Wollard (2009) defined EE as being "an emergent and working condition of a positive cognitive, emotional, and behavioral state directed at organizational outcomes" (p. 138). This definition aligns well with that established by Saks (2006) and acknowledged by Shuck (2011).

2. Components (Levels) of EE

Considering the cognitive level of EE, Lockwood (2007) referred to this level as concerning employees' beliefs about the company, its leaders, and colleagues. The emotional level contains a subtle difference from the cognitive level and considers how employees feel about the organization, their leaders, and colleagues. The behavioral level encompasses the component reflected in an employee's effort of work they're performing in a job or assignment. Lockwood (2007) argued that when an employee has the power to make decisions related to their performance, has access to information, and is equipped with the necessary development, knowledge, and training to perform in their assignments—with rewards accompanying the effort—they are more productive (p. 3).

3. Job Engagement and Organizational Engagement—Critical Measures

Saks (2006), Lockwood (2007), Shuck and Wollard (2009), and Shuck (2011) all similarly concluded that EE is a driver for organizational success. Vance (2006) supported them, saying that "engaged employees can help [the] organization achieve its mission, execute its strategy and generate important business results" (p. 28).

Highlighting the literature, Lockwood (2007) stated that "the link between high-involvement work practices and positive beliefs and attitudes—as associated with EE and generating behaviors leading to enhanced performance—is an important driver for business success" (p. 3). Again, Lockwood (2007) referenced significant research showing a connection between an employee's job and organizational strategy, making a point in stressing that "the job is the most important [measure] of EE" (p. 2) and stating "how important the job is to a firm's success" (p. 2).

Similarly, Lockwood (2007) defined and discussed four drivers that are critical measures of EE. Three of the drivers apply to job engagement, and the fourth applies to organizational engagement. The behavioral level of EE is driven by vigor, dedication, and absorption, all of which link to a work-related state of mind (Lockwood, 2007, p. 4). Lockwood (2007) went on to say that "the employee's emotional commitment to the job and company is a key lever [driver] for engagement with the degree and quality of performance depending on heart over mind" (p. 4).

Engagement is also strongly influenced by organizational characteristics— reputation for integrity, clear internal communication, and an innovative culture (Lockwood, 2007, p. 4). Note the similarity to the components/levels of EE because these organizational characteristics impact the cognitive and emotional levels, with each feeding the behavioral level. Factors such as "engagement barriers and culture also promote vigor, dedication, and absorption characteristics of EE" (Lockwood, 2007, p. 4), or detract from them in adverse organizational environments.

Testing a model of EE drivers on the critical measures of job engagement and organizational engagement, Andrew and Sofian (2011) used social exchange theory as their study's foundation (p. 569). Their findings "showed a significant difference between job engagement and organization engagement; with co-employee support as a major contributor influencing both measures of engagement" (Andrew & Sofian, 2011, p. 569). They noted six potential variables, identified as drivers that possibly influence engagement and made a hypothesis about each. The drivers they considered are as follows: employee communication, employee development, co-employee engagement, image of the organization, reward and recognition, and leadership. Concerning the previously discussed components/levels of EE, notice how the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral levels all relate to the six drivers tested by Andrew and Sofian (2011). The image of the organization falls under both cognitive and emotional levels, while leadership and reward/recognition each fall under the cognitive level and emotional level, respectively. Employee communication, development, and co-employee engagement fall under the behavioral level of EE.

Andrew and Sofian's (2011) hypothesis was that each of the six drivers would be positively related to both critical measures (pp. 571–572). When they applied multiple regression analyses on their study variables, a significant moderate correlation existed between the variable means and standard deviations (Andrew & Sofian, 2011, p. 572). Their results showed "drivers explaining a significant amount of variance in job engagement and organization engagement" (Andrew & Sofian, 2011, p. 573). "The results from the regression analysis on the six hypotheses showed co-employees support and employee development were significant predictors of job engagement while co-employees support, image of the organization and leadership were significant predictors of organization engagement" (Andrew & Sofian, 2011, p. 573).

Referencing similar work, Andrew and Sofian (2011) stated, "It is obviously clear that EE is a key business driver for organizational performance and success and that engagement is needed for high-level organizational performance and productivity" (p. 569). Not surprisingly, in their discussion, they proposed that "engaged employees have positive behaviors, attitudes, and intentions derived from a high level mutual relationship with their co-employees and their employer" (Andrew & Sofian, 2011, p. 574). Of particular interest is their claim that "employees who are provided with adequate development (training, skills and learning) are more likely to be more engaged in their job role" (Andrew & Sofian, 2011, p. 574).

The literature does suggest that a link exists between the critical measures of job engagement and organizational engagement. The connection lies with the employee's level of engagement as impacted by multiple drivers at the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral levels of EE.

4. Business Success and EE

An organization's business success also depends on the level of engagement employees have. Culture and productivity are particularly important.

a. Culture and Turnover

Psychological conditions within the organization are an important factor, according to Lockwood (2007). Shuck (2011), citing multiple research efforts on the topic, concluded that "the varying approaches remain clear and unanimous in conclusion: the development of EE inside organizations has the potential to significantly impact important organizational outcomes" (p. 317). Organizations that provide a workplace culture of meaningfulness, safety, and availability are more likely to employ engaged workers (Lockwood, 2007, p. 5). Shuck (2011) referenced the Harter, Schmidt, and Hayes (2002) satisfaction-engagement approach. This piece is one of the most widely read and cited studies on EE that used a positive psychology framework from nearly 8,000 business units of data from the Gallup

Organization (Shuck, 2011, pp. 311–312). "The results suggested EE had a positive relationship to business outcomes such as customer satisfaction, turnover, safety, and productivity" (Shuck, 2011, p. 312). Follow-on studies using similar frameworks have provided additional empirical support for use of the Harter et al. (2002) approach (Shuck, 2011, p. 312). Shuck (2011) suggested that commitment, job fit and psychological climate were all significant and that EE was significantly related to effort and intention to leave (p. 309).

b.   Productivity and High-Level Organizational Performance

Attridge (2009) referenced multiple Gallup studies estimating that disengaged employees cost U.S. companies hundreds of billions of dollars per year. To mitigate employee disengagement and increase productivity, there is "growing interest among leaders to use a positive psychology management approach focused upon developing employee strengths, defining this as a strengths-based culture" (Attridge, 2009, p. 391). Attridge (2009) went on to explain that organizational prevention efforts make even more sense (p. 392), stating, "Effective organizational-level prevention tools include better job design, resource support, working conditions, corporate culture, and use of an effective leadership style" (Attridge, 2009, p. 392). He then expanded upon each of these tools more thoroughly, referencing a direct link to improved EE when employed. Of particular importance to this research effort is job design as it relates to usage rates. Attridge (2009) explained that "employees can be placed into jobs that better match their abilities and talents, referring to the person-environment fit" (p. 392).

c.   The Link to Organizational Strategy

Effectiveness of senior management communication with employees about company strategy was related to levels of employee satisfaction, job commitment, and loyalty to the organization (Attridge, 2009, p. 390). Andrew and Sofian (2011) concluded that distinctiveness between satisfaction and commitment helps drive strategic EE. This is because the measures allow for examining every employee's role with organizational goals and the human capital strategy in a range of attitudes, behaviors, and intentions that significantly impact performance, productivity, and strategy achievement (Andrew & Sofian, 2011, p. 574). Markos and Sridevi (2010) reiterated this idea, stating, "The literature indicates employee engagement is closely linked to organizational performance" (p. 94). They went further in saying that "engaged employees are emotionally attached and highly involved in their job with a great enthusiasm for their [organization's] success" (Markos & Sridevi, 2010, p. 89). Corporate communication is also significant in that having a clearly communicated and compelling vision can facilitate community-

building efforts in organizations, which are accomplished only through individuals (Attridge, 2009, p. 393).

5. Communication's Relevance

Multiple sources provide evidence that strategic communications are an important management tool for EE. Writing about EE, Lockwood (2007) highlighted the power of communication, stating that "clear, consistent messages are an important management tool ... the workforce stays energized, focused and productive through strategic communications, which are critical to long-term organizational success" (p. 5). The message communicated by leadership to the employee provides focus areas for the organization and is the employee's only connection to strategy. Lockwood (2007) laid out five key points to consider regarding strategy as it concerns employees and goals: (1) "build employee confidence and buy-in" (p. 5) through communicating [the right messages] from the top; (2) use "focus groups" (p. 5); (3) explain "all aspects of change" (p. 5); (4) "personalize the message and address 'what's in it'" (p. 5) for the employee; and (5) "track results and set milestones to evaluate the communication plan objectives" (p. 5).

Similarly, Attridge (2009) suggested that when a clear vision was communicated, fewer employees were dissatisfied, fewer felt a weak sense of commitment, and fewer thought seriously about leaving, concluding that improved communication from executives is associated with increased, positive EE (p. 390). Taking a similar view, Lockwood (2007) pointed out that an effective strategic communications effort concerning organizational goals and objectives lends credibility to the organization's leadership. Conversely, a poorly communicated message can "lead to distrust, dissatisfaction, skepticism, cynicism and unwanted turnover" (Lockwood, 2007, p. 5). Attridge (2009) supported this idea by stating that firms communicating effectively with their employees were four times more likely to also have high levels of EE, compared to those that communicate less effectively (p. 390). Similarly, Markos and Sridevi (2010) stated that two-way communication, the degree of interest in employees' well-being, and providing plentiful opportunities for growth are the top drivers of EE (p. 94).

6. Summary

EE is a construct that has entered the mainstream SHRM literature in the past few decades, and its concepts are being applied within academia and industry. As Lockwood (2007) stated, "The employee connection to organizational strategy and goals, acknowledgement of work well done, and a culture of learning and development foster high levels of engagement, and without it, the cost of disengaged employees is detrimental to organizational success" (p. 9). The link

between EE and business success has repeatedly been substantiated through multiple studies, one of which was outlined here. The effectiveness of an organization's strategic communications message(s) contributes to the degree of engagement that employees have with their job and, through their job, with the organization's strategy. Nevertheless, in their work on performance appraisal, management, and organizational-level performance, Denisi and Smith (2014) stated that "new ideas on how to better manage performance to increase EE are needed" (p. 137). The researcher now provides a short discussion concerning a closely related construct to EE: performance management.

C. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

1. What is Performance Management?

a. Performance Management and the Performance Measurement System

Performance management (PM), according to Forslund (2011), is described as "a process consisting of five activities: selecting performance variables, defining metrics, setting targets, measuring and analyzing" (p. 297). The Society for Human Resource Management defined PM as "the organized method of monitoring results of work activities, collecting and evaluating performance to determine achievement of goals, and using performance information to make decisions, allocate resources and communicate whether objectives are met" (Putzier, 2010). Within the umbrella of PM, a performance measurement system (PMS) quantifies the efficiency and effectiveness of an individual's actions as determined by a defined set of metrics (Neely, Gregory, & Platts, 2005, p. 1229).

b. The PMS as an Entity

Effective PMSs consist of a number of individual performance metrics. Kaplan and Norton's (1996) balanced scorecard was introduced as a relevant framework capable of providing managers with sufficient information to address a number of questions concerning (1) translating the vision, (2) communicating and linking, (3) business planning, and (4) feedback/learning. Neely et al. (2005) pointed out that the following guidelines can help select a preferred set of performance criteria: (1) criteria must be chosen from the company's objectives, (2) criteria must compare similar organizations in the same business line, (3) the purpose of each criterion must be clear, (4) data collection and metrics for performance criterion must be clearly stated, (5) ratio-based criteria are preferred to absolutes, and (6) criteria should be under the control of the evaluated unit (pp. 1244–1245).

c.   Environmental Considerations for the PMS

A PMS, once developed, is employed within an environment. Since similar organizations may operate in different environments, the impact on a duplicated PMS in a foreign environment is likely to yield different results.

To better define the impact on a PMS, Neely et al. (2005) defined two fundamental dimensions within the environment in which the system is deployed. The internal dimension concerns two organizational aspects: (1) what it must excel at and (2) how it must continue to improve and create value—an innovation and learning perspective (Neely et al., 2005, p. 1248). The external dimension considers the market within which competition exists and comprises a customer element and a competitor element (Neely et al., 2005, pp. 1248–1251). Weatherly (2004) linked both dimensions to PM, saying that competitive pressures (internal and external) force the transformation of the PM function within most organizations (p. 3). Thus, there exist internal and external pressures to consider regarding deployment of PMSs.

2.   Line-of-Sight Linkage—Organizational Goals and Individual Performance

Line of sight is a phrase used within PM literature to describe an important connection concerning strategic goals and employees. For strategic goals to be achieved, those goals must be meaningful to the employee and hence must affect and draw upon individual performance. In summarizing various researchers' conclusions, Markos and Sridevi (2010) supported suggestions that to keep employees engaged, an organization must employ a strong performance management system.

a.   The Performance Management System Role

As Neely et al. (2005) alluded to, performance management systems, encompassing the previously discussed performance measurement system, are an important element for linking individual efforts to organizational goals. Supporting this conclusion, Mihm (2003) looked at results-oriented cultures in a U. S. General Accounting Office (GAO) report on modern PMSs for federal workers and their effectiveness. The Mihm (2003) study found that modern systems drive safeguards and accountability, while dated systems, based on episodic and paper-intensive exercises, are not linked to the organization's strategic plan and have only a modest impact on use, development, and promotion potential (Mihm, 2003, What GAO Found section, para. 1–2).

b. Key Practices

Conversely, leading organizations use PMSs to accelerate change, achieve desired results, and facilitate continuous two-way communication that smooths the way for discussion about individual and organizational performance. These systems become tools to help the organization manage itself and its workforce (Mihm, 2003, What GAO Found section, para. 2). The GAO identified practices that leading public organizations use to link organizational goals to individual performance, creating line of sight between individual's activities and organizational outcomes (Mihm, 2003, What GAO Found section, para. 3).

c. Impact on Nonprofit Organizations

De Waal, Goedegebuure, and Geradts (2011) set out to provide solid empirical evidence of the effects of performance management on an organization's outcomes because many articles and case studies have used qualitative performance measures, not quantitative ones. The practical implications of performance management support improvement of nonprofit organizations; however, simultaneously, management must continuously attend to the critical success factors and knowledge performance indicators to ensure that the PMS becomes and remains successful over an extended time period (de Waal et al., 2011).

3. Competency-Based Performance Management Systems

Moving further into the PMS domain, Martone (2003) defined competency-based performance management systems as "a formalized way of establishing the skills and behaviors that employees need to be successful in their present roles and for future growth in their organization" (p. 23). He went on to say, "It is a way of informing employees of company expectations, and it sets them on a clearly defined path toward achieving specified goals, providing the framework for aligning employees' job performance with the organization's strategic objectives" (Martone, 2003, p. 23). Thus, common goals and underlying objectives are key for common success. Drawing from numerous definitions, Draganidis and Mentzas (2006) defined competency to be "a combination of tacit and explicit knowledge, behaviors and skills that gives someone the potential for effectiveness in task performance" (p. 53).

a. Competency and Skills Management

Reviewing systems and approaches, Draganidis and Mentzas (2006) discussed competence and skills management, noting that "competency based approaches are critical tools for organizational functions such as workforce and succession planning and performance appraisal" (p. 52). The reasons for selecting

such approaches are (1) skills identification, knowledge, behaviors, and capabilities for personnel selection to align with strategies and (2) to focus the individual development plans and eliminate gaps between competencies needed in jobs and those available (Draganidis & Mentzas, 2006, p. 52). Defining a framework entitled the competency life cycle, Draganidis and Mentzas (2006) discussed an aggregation of four macro-phases that, collectively, aim at the continuous enhancement and development of individual and organizational competencies (p. 54).

Conversely, Collis and Montgomery (2008) argued the following:

> Core competence has too often become a feel good exercise that no one fails. Every [organization] can identify one activity that it does relatively better than others and claim it as a core competency. Unfortunately, core competence should not be an internal assessment of which [activities] the [organization] performs best. It should be a harsh external assessment of what it does better than competitors, for which the phrase distinctive competence is more appropriate. (p. 146)

Returning to the Draganidis and Mentzas (2006) competency life-cycle construct, competency mapping, competency diagnosis, competency development, and monitoring of competencies are the identifiers assigned to each of the four macro-phases (p. 54).

To note in particular, Draganidis and Mentzas (2006) defined the phrase *competency standard* as "identifying the essential skills and knowledge workers must have, and defining the performance levels they must achieve to demonstrate competency in a specific work segment or function*" (p. 55). The competency profile "is a tool describing the set of competencies particular to a position/job/occupational group/functional community" (Draganidis & Mentzas, 2006, p. 55).

b.   *Evolving Ideas for Performance Management*

In a radical change of direction concerning workforce development, Baumann et al. (2014) developed a competency-based, industry-driven education for the manufacturing industry and brought together industry, government, and education sectors to develop this curriculum. They stated that "industry, education and government stakeholders are redefining their partnerships and working together to create competency-based, industry-driven education at the local, state, and national levels*" (Baumann et al., 2014, Abstract section, para. 1). Baumann et al. (2011) supported their position that "the U.S. education system, unable to meet industry standards for skills and development training, is now facing a paradigm shift in technical and professional education" (p. 31). They proposed that the three primary stakeholders in this industry form *"a strategic alliance and create

competency-based, industry driven education" (Baumann et al., 2014, p. 31). Substituting the more general term *organizations* for *manufacturers* is easily accomplished, and the statement is readily transferrable to any industry or sector. Baumann et al. (2014) went on to discuss development and validation of industry-driven curriculum combined with credentialing, assessment standards, and validation of learning and development outcomes for employees. Draganidis and Mentzas (2006) identified the core components of a competency-based PMS as follows:

> Typical core components of a competency-based PMS are (1) identification/assessment of desired results, (2) competency models—identifying competencies that truly have an impact on results, (3) Employee competency assessment—knowing the state of employee competencies in order to compare them with desired/ideal state (competency model), and (4) employee development strategies and resources—individuals needing the training and development programs and resources that address gaps in competencies. (p. 55)

Supporting such a paradigm shift in education, Martone's (2003) work suggested that the key elements for a competency-based PMS are (1) establish competencies, (2) set goals and performance expectations, (3) monitor performance and provide explicit feedback as it relates to competencies, (4) complete the employee profile and development plan, and (5) begin succession planning to ensure that qualified employees are available at the time and place that vacancies are scheduled to exist (Martone, 2003, pp. 24–28).

4.   Summary

Performance management is a construct linking individual performance to organizational goals through a line of sight that an employee is willing and able to act on. Less than a third of employees believe that their company's current PM process assists them in improving; however, PM is a critical aspect of organizational effectiveness (Gruman & Saks, 2011, p. 123).

Implementing an effective PMS that is linked to strategy is important for organizations to employ in order to connect the individual's daily efforts to strategic objectives, thereby enabling attainment of strategic goals. Taking PM a step further, competency-based PMSs allow for identifying and promoting the KSACs to pursue organizational strategy with a benefit to the individual. Ensuring that employees seek to obtain and maintain the KSACs best suited for the individual to improve their prospects for performing well is important to the organization and is a critical element for employee development throughout a career. Performance management is used to incentivize and maintain KSACs while benefiting both the individual and the organization.

D. CONCLUSION

Performance management and employee engagement are closely related constructs. Utilizing EE measures and the underlying drivers for aligning performance is one way to increase employee effort toward strategy—through empowerment and incentivizing employees to improve individual KSACs in a manner consistent with and supportive of organizational strategy. Because very few employees believe that their organization's performance management process assists them in improving, opportunities may exist to refine performance management while simultaneously increasing employee engagement to the organization's benefit. Improved engagement may be achieved through deploying strategy-linked EE drivers within a revised performance management system by utilizing performance metrics for tracking an employee's contribution to, and the organization's progress toward, strategy through a competency-based system. By capitalizing on well-established strategic communications mechanisms, the intended strategic message may be delivered and an organization may reap benefits if the message is received and acted on. In combination with a revised PMS that incorporates ideas from EE, individuals can be positively engaged with the organization's strategic goals and objectives, benefiting themselves while contributing to a larger effort.

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III. METHODOLOGY: EXPLORATORY THEMATIC ANALYSIS

A. THEMATIC CODING OF STRATEGIC GUIDANCE AND *IT'S YOUR CAREER PLAYBOOKS*

Methods demonstrated by Hahn (2008) are used to perform the coding effort required for an exploratory thematic analysis of the data this research encompasses. As described in Chapter I, three NAVSUP strategic documents and three individual guidance documents are data sources for this research. Each group of documents underwent Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3 coding and memoing techniques (explained in further detail later in this chapter) using Microsoft (MS) Word. A *code* is defined as "a thought captured in a phrase that can help answer the research question" (Hahn, 2008, p. 94). *Memoing* is described as "descriptive scaffolding for ideas and facts about participants, demographics, sequential thoughts, discrete ingredients, actins, and proceedings" (Hahn, 2008, p. 95). Converting each source document from an Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) file into a Microsoft Word (.docx) file and deleting all photos enabled the researcher to format the documents into the form required in Hahn (2008).

1. Level 1 Coding Discussion

The researcher, following Hahn's (2008) techniques, used the MS Word insert command and applied a single column table to all paragraphs contained within the documents. With the exception of *SVS* (NAVSUP, 2010), the entire document's contents were used as data because the content is relevant to this study. Excluded from the *SVS* data document are community management discussions and initiatives because these areas are outside the scope of this research. The researcher applied the same technique to relevant elements of *SVS*, as described in Chapter I, Section C.2 (Methodology).

SVS (NAVSUP, 2010), the first document coded, is used to demonstrate how Level 1 codes were applied. Because similar techniques were applied to the remaining five data documents, the same explanation for all documents is not given. By grouping segments of the data into cells, appropriate separation and organization of the data allowed for converting the documents into a manageable form. During the first reading of the document, the data was organized into cells and appropriately grouped. Once grouping was completed, two additional columns were inserted to the left of the data column, as described in Figure 3. These two columns were used during initial coding to identify the row number and Level 1 code/memo entry at a particular line. This coding allows for easy reference during higher level coding and analysis, as explained by Hahn (2008).

Row #	Level 1 Code or Memo	Data (headings, subheadings, and words copied exactly from the document)
	Thematic Analysis Level 1 code or memo about data from the table cell at right.	Exploratory thematic analysis uses Level 1 codes and memos to organize written data.
1.	Code or memo, as applicable, appears here.	The document's next heading, subheading, paragraph, or sentence appears here.

Figure 3.   Level 1 Coding Format in MS Word
(Adapted from Hahn, 2008)

Upon completing the first reading and organizing the document during the early stages of Level 1 coding, the researcher began a second reading of the document. During this effort, each line of the document was carefully read and reflected upon, and a Level 1 code was assigned or a memo was documented in the middle column. When multiple codes or memos were assigned, the text was color coded to allow for easier reference when revisiting the row during future analysis of the document. Hahn's (2008) techniques capitalized on MS Word functionality to easily group codes and memos at the beginning of the data document.

The MS Word Mark Citation Table of Authorities tool was used to document and organize Level 1 codes for use during the Level 2 and Level 3 coding effort, discussed in the next section. Using the citation tool allowed the researcher to assign each code to a category, the focus of Level 2 coding. As data were coded during the second reading of the document, codes were developed and entered as citations into the Table of Authorities. Upon completion of a document section's coding, the Insert Table of Authorities tool was used to insert a list of codes at the beginning of the data document.

The Headings tool, per Hahn's (2008) techniques, was used for consolidating data document memos made during Level 1 coding. When a memo was made in the center column, Heading 1 was applied to that text. Inserting a table of contents at the beginning of the data document allowed for listing all memos in one location for easy reference once analysis began. This step was performed at the end of each document's section of coding and memoing, and the update field command was used to keep summarized memos updated while the Level 1 coding effort progressed through the data document.

As stated previously, the tools described for Level 1 coding of *SVS* were applied during Level 1 coding of all data documents at the center of this research. The Level 1 codes were then grouped using the citation tool's Category option to begin developing Level 2 codes and organizing the data for higher level coding, organization, and analysis. As shown in Figure 4, this diagram is based on the technique described by Hahn (2008).
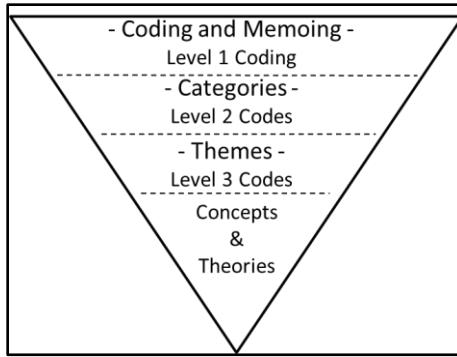
Figure 4.   Diagram of Thematic Coding
(Adapted from Hahn, 2008)

2.   Level 2 and Level 3 Coding Discussion

As the Level 1 coding effort progressed, codes repeated and naturally grouped together. From these groups, categories were identified and assigned. Some of these categories became Level 2 codes and were assigned the Category designator in the Mark Citation Table of Authorities tool, as guided by Hahn (2008). Doing so made the analysis of categories and the codes within each document easy because the codes and categories appeared at the beginning of each data document and the table of authorities referenced the page number on which the code appeared. It also allowed for the easy transition of data into higher level coding in MS Excel, as Hahn (2008) used in his technique.

Once Level 1 coding was finished within the MS Word data document, MS Excel was incorporated into the thematic coding effort, as advised by Hahn (2008). Using the MS Excel QR_ControlPanelTemplate.xls—available from the companion website used with Hahn (2008)—the researcher began higher level coding efforts. Following the guidance by Hahn (2008), the researcher created two workbooks, identified as QR_Database and Level 2, 3, and 4 Codes, respectively.

The QR_Database workbook template, provided by Hahn (2008), is organized to list all Level 1 codes in Column A, the Level 1 code's idea source in Column B, the raw text inspiring the Level 1 code in Column D, the Level 2 code (Category) in Column E, and the Level 3 code (not yet determined, but known in thematic coding as themes) in Column F, as seen in Figure 5. The researcher added two additional columns (Functional Area and Professional Cert) during the course of analysis that are further discussed during the analysis portion of this report. In each column, the sorting feature of MS Excel has been activated to allow for quickly viewing and grouping data by different code levels. The third row of Figure 5 shows the first data entry containing the Level 1 code, Idea Source (an alpha-numeric identifier that references the MS Word data document location from which the Level 1 code originates), the Level 2 code column containing the category

assigned to the Level 1 code in the far left-hand column, and the Level 3 code column containing the Level 3 code within which the Level 2 code is grouped. The Functional Area column, Professional Cert column, and Theoretical Concept (Level 4 code) column are discussed in Chapter IV.

Qualitative Research *Excel* Control Panel							
Level 1 Code	Idea Source	Functional Area	Raw text data that inspired the Level 1 Code	Level 2 Code	Level 3 Code	Professional Cert	Theoretical Concept
Copy to new row below from the Word code document (middle column)				Type new L2 codes in new row then copy them to "unique" list. Copy existing L2 codes from "unique" list.		The specific functional area from which a professional certification is available from an industry standard.	
Autonomous logisticians	11CA		Vision Statement: "To produce **autonomous**, resourceful military **logisticians with broad skills** who deliver operational logistics, supply chain management, and acquisition and business capabilities to provide mission readiness"	Strategy	Competency		Autonomous - acting independently or having the freedom to do so.

Figure 5. Screenshot of Database in MS Excel
(Adapted from Hahn, 2008)

The *Level 2, 3, and 4 Codes* workbook contains the legend for the work performed in the *QR_Database* workbook, as shown in Figure 6.

Type new higher level codes here. Copy and paste higer level codes to the appropriate column in the QR_Database worksheet Sort the columns alphabetically to facilitate easier viewing. Use Data>Sort command.		
List of Unique Level 2 Code Names	List of UNIQUE Level 3 Code Names	List of Unique Level 4 (Theoretical Concepts) Code
Level 2 Code Name here	Level 3 Code Name here	Level 4 Code name here

Figure 6. Level 2, 3, & 4 Codes Legend
(Adapted from Hahn, 2008)

In working between each MS Excel workbook, the researcher used color codes as Level 3 codes developed from the Level 2 coding effort. Color coding allowed the researcher to easily track what lower level code belonged to each Level 3 category; these results are presented in Chapter IV.

This concludes the discussion concerning how thematic codes were identified and managed during this research. The next section discusses how these codes were used with MS Excel's sorting capability to perform analysis between and across each document and document group, respectively.

IV.   DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The coding effort resulted in 339 Level 1 codes, 14 categories (Level 2 codes), and three themes (Level 3 codes). A fourth theme, Challenge, is not a theme in itself but is used as an identifier in the Level 3 code column to highlight data points for consideration during the analysis efforts of this research.

The 339 Level 1 codes span a wide range of ideas from strategy execution to customer satisfaction and competencies, all pulling from ideas contained within the six data documents coded for this research. Every Level 1 code is assigned to a category (Level 2 code) to better organize the data in preparation for analysis. The 14 categories and three themes are listed in Table 1.

Table 1.   Thematic Coding Results—Categories and Themes Resulting From Level 1 Coding

Category Level 2 Code	Theme Level 3 Code
Knowledge Skill Ability Behavior Functional Expertise Strategic Objectives	Functional Competency
Education Qualification Experience Occupational Certification Professional Certification	Credential
Professional Association Community Strategy	Affiliation

The categories ended up being repeatedly referenced throughout all data documents. The emphasis on these things, some appearing much more than others, allowed the researcher to use these categories as the main points to be extracted from the documents.

After significant thought and consideration, the three themes were identified and categories assigned to the appropriate theme. Using these three themes and 14 categories, the researcher performed the within analysis and across analysis of all six documents using the analytical power of MS Excel to analyze the documents. Hahn (2008) introduced significant sorting capabilities available in MS Excel. These

include text filters to allow for looking at single data document codes, categories, and themes or multiple data documents' codes, categories, and themes as a group. These tools were used in analyzing alignment within and across the two document groups, as well as for the across analysis of the strategic guidance and *IYC* documents.

A.   ALIGNMENT ANALYSIS WITHIN INDIVIDUAL CAREER GUIDANCE

A within analysis, identified by on each document in Figure 1, documented what the *IYC* guidance communicates to the reader. The overall idea behind these playbooks is for individual officers to complete X, Y, and Z, as laid out within the guidance, in order to succeed (OSCP, 2011a). A description of what is required for success—according to *IYC* guidance—follows.

1.   Aligned Documents

The *It's Your Career* (OSCP, 2011a) playbook acknowledges its supporting playbooks and provides the big picture for what an individual officer must consider in order to succeed in the U.S. Navy Supply Corps. The *It's Your Experience* (OSCP, 2011c) playbook defines exactly what experiences are needed to continue progressing throughout a career and aligns with the *It's Your Career* playbook guidance.

2.   Unaligned Documents

The *It's Your Education* (OSCP, 2011b) playbook outlines many academic opportunities needed throughout a career for developing and remaining competitive with peers, aligning well with the *It's Your Career* playbook guidance. When comparing *It's Your Education* and *It's Your Experience*, however, the two playbooks have some misalignment. The *It's Your Experience* discussion contains an education element since it relates to career experience within the U.S. Navy Supply Corps, mentioning education 18 times in the 36-page document. However, *It's Your Education* doesn't touch on experience or how that experience is enhanced and supported by academic opportunities.

3.   Measures of Success

Today's *IYC* measures of success are well known within the U.S. Navy Supply Corps and easily identified in the playbooks. Guidance to achieve credentials, competencies, and affiliations are consistently presented throughout the *IYC* playbooks. This guidance claims that "the skills and talents needed to support maritime logistics efforts are provided through job rotations, qualifications, assignments, and education*"* (OSCP, 2011a).

Job rotations, "providing exposure to logistics management at all levels" (OSCP, 2011a), are the means by which qualifications, such as additional qualification designators (AQDs), naval officer billet classifications (NOBCs), and joint experience are achieved (OSCP, 2011a). These are based solely on the amount of time spent in a job and do not require validation of competency in that assignment, nor do they involve doing the job right as compared to industry standards in order to claim credit for the applicable AQD or NOBC.

The *It's Your Career* playbook states that "qualifications include warfare qualifications, functional subspecialties achieved through master's level education [combined with] significant experience tours, and joint duty designation along with formal acquisitions community experience and training" (OSCP, 2011a).

The *It's Your Career* playbook also claims "sustained superior performance" as useful to measure success in job assignments while working as a U.S. Navy Supply Corps officer. In the Career Development Philosophies section of the *It's Your Career* (OSCP, 2011a) playbook, the following statement appears: "It should be emphasized that a successful career in the Supply Corps is a result of Sustained Superior Performance at sea and ashore" (OSCP, 2011a, p. 4). "At sea and ashore" is interpreted to mean in all job assignments, both operational and staff jobs while deployed and at home, regardless of whether those locations are in the United States or elsewhere. A determination for what exactly "sustained superior performance" means is not made during this research.

Another item discussed in the *IYC* series regarding success measures are Defense Acquisition Corps qualifications and affiliation. These qualifications are of an occupational nature and do not, at this time, require continuing education credits for maintaining an appropriate level of competency within a designated acquisition area.

As demonstrated in the *It's Your Education* (OSCP, 2011b) playbook, academic education is a major pillar upon which success is measured. Without pursuing and achieving a master's degree from an academic institution, careers stall. The higher level academics geared toward executives are highly regarded, and not seeking out these opportunities is a danger to promotion to higher ranks.

Lastly, affiliation with the U.S. Navy Supply Corps Foundation and Navy Supply Corps Association chapters is advertised as crucial to Espirit de Corps in *IYC*. It is the link for building relationships within the organization and the bridge to the mentoring program where career guidance is provided on a more personal level. Affiliation with this organization is a factor in a U.S. Navy Supply Corps officer's success.

B. ALIGNMENT ANALYSIS WITHIN ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIC GUIDANCE

An analysis concerning the *CG13*, *SP*, and *SVS* is made in the following paragraphs, with strengths and weaknesses identified when analyzed in pairs.

1. *CG13* and *SP*

The *CG13* and the *SP* complement each other and demonstrate strong and weak alignment depending upon the perspective each is viewed from (individual or organizational).

a. Strong Alignment

The *CG13* and the *SP* are fully aligned with one another. *CG13* is an extension of the *SP* and contains identical strategic goals, as defined in the *SP*. Each *CG13* objective supports the related *SP* goal.

b. Weak Alignment

The *CG13* and the *SP*, although strongly aligned with each other, contain weaknesses as they relate to the individual officer. This discussion is saved for Chapter IV, Section C (Alignment Analysis—Individual Guidance With Organizational Strategy).

2. *SVS*

SVS contains an excellent discussion of what the senior officers of the year 2040 should be considering for effectively meeting the challenges in the decades ahead. It contains an excellent officer development discussion and an accompanying vision that identifies future skill sets for today's officers to consider pursuing in the years ahead.

CG13 and *SP* guidance vaguely support *SVS*, and gaps exist between the far-reaching *SVS* and the near-term *CG13* and *SP*, as shown in Figure 7. *IYC* playbooks can bridge gaps and incentivize the individual officer to contribute directly to the organizational strategy.

Figure 7.   The Gap Within Strategic Documents
(Adapted from NAVSUP, 2010, 2013a, 2013b)

C.   ALIGNMENT ANALYSIS—INDIVIDUAL GUIDANCE WITH ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGY

As visualized in Figure 8, the officer development strategy as discussed in Chapter 10 of *SVS* (NAVSUP, 2010) is unachievable using today's individual development model as promoted by the *IYC* playbooks. The *CG13* and *IYC* across analysis results are the same as the *SP* and *IYC* across analysis results. *SP* and *CG13* are too vague and disconnected to the *IYC* guidance for individual officers to engage the objectives and have reasonable assurance that their actions will (1) assist the NAVSUP and U.S. Navy Supply Corps organizations and (2) contribute to their self-interest concerning career advancement in the U.S. Navy Supply Corps.
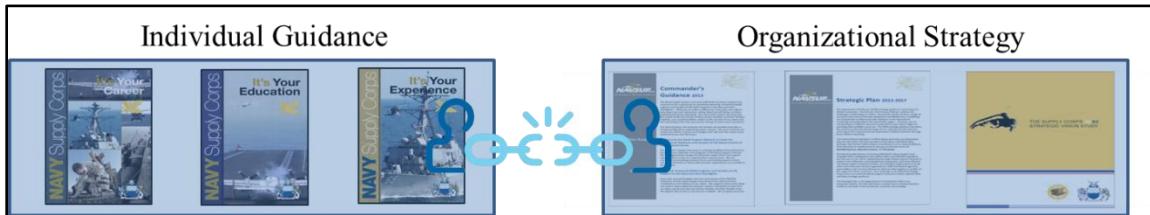
Figure 8.   The Gap Between Individual Guidance and Organizational Strategy
(Adapted from NPC, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c, 2011d; NAVSUP, 2010, 2013a, 2013b)

a. An individual officer following today's *IYC* playbook and achieving the measures of success outlined within *IYC* does not support the organization's strategic guidance or year 2040 officer development strategy.

b. The future requirements identified within *SVS* must be specifically identified and the appropriate metrics merged with *IYC* requirements to promote and measure progress toward strategy. A discussion of specifics follows.

c. Strategic requirements must be incorporated into *IYC* guidance and rewarded once accomplished. These incentives must exist in order for individuals to pursue strategic requirements, as Chapter II demonstrated. Without incorporating individual requirements into individual career guidance, officers must focus on what actions enhance their careers, and at this time, those actions conform only to the *IYC* guidance.

1.   Gap Identification

Three reasons exist as to why preceding bullets a, b, and c are each true, and these reasons emerge from the thematic coding discussed earlier in this chapter:

a. ***Competency Gaps*:** Sturgess (2006) defined *competency* as "a cluster of measurable and related abilities, commitments, knowledge, and skills enabling effectiveness, and leading to superior performance in a job or situation" (What Is a Competency section, para. 1). Because the measureable element of this definition for competency is of significance, a competency gap exists when metrics for gauging competency are missing.

b. ***Credentialing Gaps*:** Durley (2005) defined a *credential* as follows: The umbrella term that includes the concepts of accreditation, licensure, registration, and professional certification. Credentialing can establish criteria for fairness, quality, competence, and/or safety for professional services provided by authorized individuals, for products, or for educational endeavors. Credentialing is the process by which an entity, authorized and qualified to do so, grants formal recognition to, or records the recognition status of individuals, organizations, institutions, programs, processes, services or products that meet predetermined and standardized criteria. (p. 4)

A credentialing gap exists when credentials are missing from an individual development plan if credentialing organizations are available to provide the certification service for a specific functional area.

c. ***Affiliation Gaps:*** In this research, *affiliation* refers to an individual's relationship with internal and external professional organizations. It may include an affiliation with the U.S. Navy Supply Corps Association (internal) or an external organization such as the Project Management Institute or the American Petroleum Institute, Institute for Supply Management or the American Society for Training & Development. An affiliation gap exists when functional areas within an organization fall

under a professional credentialing body's area of expertise but is not utilized for an employee's professional development.

In the following sections, the themes competency, credentialing, and affiliation are discussed at length because each relates to the NAVSUP strategic initiatives and *IYC* guidance.

2. Competency Theme—Strategic and Individual Guidance

    a. A gap exists between *SVS* and *SP*. The officer development discussion within Chapter 10 of *SVS* (NAVSUP, 2010) claims that "the throw them in the deep end, educate them, and mentor them methodology has proven to be very effective at instilling in every U.S. Navy Supply Corps officer the core competencies and knowledge necessary for success in dynamic and demanding operating environments" (p. 103). *SVS* discusses this enduring development model at length, claiming that the "throw them in the deep end element will endure and underpin core competency development" (NAVSUP, 2010, p. 103).

    SP (NAVSUP, 2013b) is described as "the beginning of a fundamental shift in our corporate culture, one that will move us away from a reactive business model to one that is more proactive, nuanced, and strategic" (para. 4). Assessing the nature of the phrase "throw them in the deep end," it is one of a reactionary nature and directly contrary to the organization's strategic guidance. Immersing individuals into a "sink or swim" environment without the proper KSACs is bound to cause them uncertainty regarding whether they are doing work right, even though they may be doing the right things in order to succeed, as defined by *IYC* guidance.

    b. Individual competency validation is a continuing necessity. Validating competency can be accomplished in a number of ways, but each method must utilize a measurable standard to give the validation meaning in the broader context of a profession or function area. *CG13* (NAVSUP, 2013a) Strategic Objective 1.3 states the following:

> We will develop competency/functional and leadership based training and development tracts and implement as part of employee Individual Development Plans (IDPs) for both civilian and military personnel. This includes identifying all required skill sets as well as professional certifications (DAWIA, CDFM, etc.). (pp. 4–5)

The organization recognizes the importance of competency and functional-based development tracts at the strategic level. However, within *IYC* guidance, the term *competency* goes unmentioned. *CG* (NAVSUP, 2013a), *SP* (NAVSUP, 2013b), and *SVS* (NAVSUP, 2010) all reference the need for individual competency attainment, but the idea is missing from *IYC* (OSCP, 2011a). Measurements by which competency can be attained are missing from both guidance groups: strategic and individual.

As discussed in the introduction, individual measures of success currently do not require competency validation within the functional areas that U.S. Navy Supply Corps officers operate. Lacking this additional measure, the organization is unlikely to determine the percentage of its members that are competent to perform functional area work.

c. The current requirements for individual officer progression, as outlined within *IYC* (OSCP, 2011a), are demonstrated using the current career milestones, provided as Figure 9.
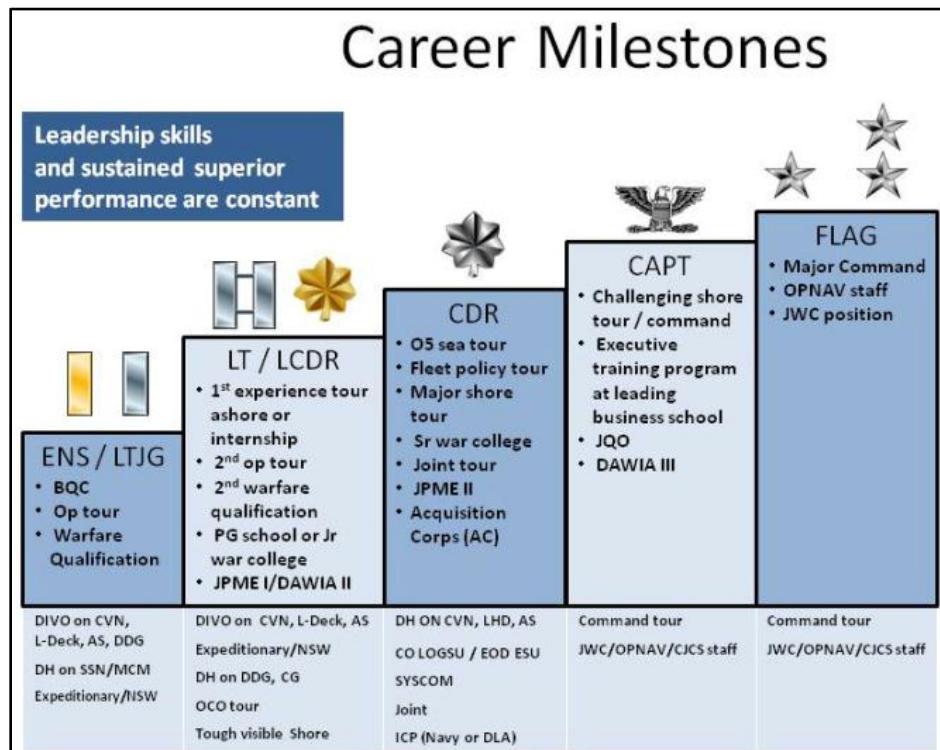
Figure 9.   Career Milestones
(OSCP, 2011a, p. 9)

Of particular interest is the note preceding this model, and the use of *sustained superior performance.* Again, an effort to define this phrase is not made. However, it is clear that this phrase is not measurable. Working from the left side of the milestone model (see Figure 9) and moving to the right, the requirements for promotion contain what was listed earlier in Chapter IV, Section A.1.c (Measures of Success). Missing from this model is achievement and maintenance of competency in any particular functional area frequently filled by U.S. Navy Supply Corps officers.

Industry requires its professionals to achieve and maintain competency within the realm of work that individuals do. The idea is apparent in other Department of Defense organizations. For example, the U.S. Navy Medical Service Corps (MSC) requires its officers to validate competency via the Certified Defense Financial Manager (CDFM) certification at the conclusion of the Financial and Material Management Training Course (FMMTC). Completion of this course is one requirement for the Resource Management and Logistician AQD, and the course includes a formal board in front of a subject-matter expert panel in addition to a final exam. The last two days of the FMMTC course is allocated for MSC officer students to take the CDFM exam. The MSC highly regards being a member of the American Society of Military Comptrollers and having the CDFM credential. In addition, for MSC logisticians and comptrollers, it is career enhancing to be formally affiliated with the American Association of Medical Assistants.

The U.S. Navy Human Resources officer community requires its officers to pursue, achieve, and maintain professional certifications from the Human Resources Management Institute and links officer competency validation to promotion eligibility. The organization also capitalizes upon the Project Management Institute's Project Management Professional certification and continuing education program for validating competency in the project management field. Similar to the U.S. Navy Human Resources, the U.S. Navy Supply Corps has an interest in project management, but it does not advertise this professional certification as being valuable among our officers because the certification is not mentioned in strategic or individual guidance and is not required for promotion purposes.

Other examples exist of both organizations that utilize professional certification standards and those that utilize specific professional certifications applicable to the wide range of functional areas spanning the U.S. Navy Supply Corps lines of operation. As can be seen in Figure 9, *IYC* lacks any mention of achieving professional certifications—either implicit or explicit—for promotion eligibility. *CG13* Strategic Objective 1.3 directly identifies the CDFM, and this is a great start. However, *CG/14* removes mention of professional certifications, even though it does allude to having necessary expertise in the contracting and financial

management disciplines. How this expertise is validated and measured, however, is not discussed and remains elusive in the outdated *IYC* guidance.

3. Credentialing Theme—Strategic and Individual Guidance

For the U.S. Navy Supply Corps to compete and be relevant in the year 2040 joint environment, individual officers must pursue and achieve credentials that the logistics community views as relevant to the work being performed. The organization's current guidance requires officers to achieve credentials as they advance during their careers. The organization's current credentialing requirements include occupational certifications, academic education, qualifications, and experience (OSCP, 2011a). The missing credential that is important to competency maintenance is the professional certification.

a. Occupational certifications currently valued by the U.S. Navy Supply Corps are Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) Defense Acquisition University certification programs. These online and resident courses require an officer who is filling a defense acquisition billet to complete a combination of experience and coursework in order to become certified at different occupational levels (Levels 1, 2, and 3). These are great occupational-level credentials, but no continuing education or maintenance is required in these programs. An officer can complete the requirement and never have to update it while retaining the certification level achieved, no matter how long it has been since completing it.

b. Academic education is the second area utilized by the U.S. Navy Supply Corps as a metric for officer credentials and promotion eligibility. Combining the academic achievement with a relevant experience tour earns the officer a subspecialty; however, a significant usage problem exists within the community. Without remaining in a particular field (such as financial management or contracting) after completing an academic achievement in that field, the subspecialty code remains in the officer's record while the KSACs gained during the academic experience fade.

c. The current qualification requirements for U.S. Navy Supply Corps officers are warfare centric. These are crucial in the development of a Supply Corps officer because they allow for smoother communication with the warfighters concerning systems degradation and capabilities when discussing parts requirements and costs for repairing systems. The one shortcoming is that these qualifications do not add to a Supply Corps officer's logistics body of knowledge and fail to provide or

validate functional-area KSACs that a professional logistician should have.

d. The experience element is measured by the U.S. Navy Supply Corps' phrase *sustained superior performance* across multiple functional areas, leading to a cultural mentality of the Supply Corps officer being a "jack of all trades, master of none." Attaining rank and surviving previous duty assignments doesn't automatically qualify officers to perform well in a new assignment, especially if that assignment is outside the scope of anything they have previously experienced. The experience credential, as used today, is problematic on two fronts. One, continuing to "throw officers in the deep end" doesn't align with the organization's strategy or the long-term officer development plan. Two, the individual continues operating in the reactive business model that strategy is trying to change.

e. Identifying professional certifications that are relevant to multiple functional areas and lines of operation and including these credentials in the career milestones model and *IYC* guidance is a credential missing from the credentialing theme. Professional certifications are mentioned in the guidance, but it is the detail behind the credential that officers need in order to pursue the right certifications that can directly support the strategic effort and validate, and maintain, the KSACs needed for supporting the effort.

4. **Affiliation Theme—Strategic and Individual Guidance**

a. Affiliation with internal entities is highly regarded in the U.S. Navy Supply Corps. As the *It's Your Career* (OSCP, 2011a) playbook states, "Maintaining membership with Supply Corps Associations is important. Participating in charitable events and formulating Espirit de Corps is highly regarded among some U.S. Navy Supply Corps officers, as it is through these channels that mentoring and life-long relationships flourish" (OSCP, 2011a, p. 11). *IYC* guidance touts the importance of officers' affiliating with their peers, seniors, and subordinates in this way. This affiliation is recognized in *SVS* as well, linking it to the culture of mentoring that is claimed to exist. The success of this mentoring program and affiliation with Navy Supply Corps Association chapters has not been measured.

b. Externships and opportunities in industry are discussed in *SVS*. An externship is "the placement of an officer within international, interagency, and non-governmental/commercial organizations to

provide officers with practical corporate experience in their field of study outside of the Department of Defense environment" (NAVSUP, 2010, p. 107). Creating such affiliations is touted as important for officers in the year 2040, and the researcher argues that such affiliations are important for today's officers as well. However, there are very few opportunities for officers to enter these assignments, because only four officers are selected to fill an externship roll per year, and the length of the externship is only one year.

c. *SVS* (NAVSUP, 2010) states that "the Supply Corps use [externships] to develop contacts with private sector companies to learn the latest commercial methods and to improve logistics business practices" (p. 107). There is a fundamental problem with an effort to affiliate with industry through such a small number of officers and ask them to integrate commercial methods into an organization as large as the Department of Defense or NAVSUP. *SVS* (NAVSUP, 2010) recognizes that "no clear mechanism exists for these officers to transfer their knowledge to the largest possible [NAVSUP] audience" (p. 107). *SP* and *CG13* contain guidance for incorporating industry best practices but neglect the detail that individual officers require in order to act. Affiliation with external organizations, associations, and societies is an important element of strategy and is important for individual officers. *IYC* doesn't mention a need to make external affiliation during a career within the U.S. Navy Supply Corps.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. INTRODUCTION

This project provides an internal look at the NAVSUP's near-, mid-, and long-term strategy as supported by the U.S. Navy Supply Corps officer development guidance. It reviews the literature applicable to the employee's connection with organizational strategy; analyzes and identifies common themes among two sets of documents—individual guidance and organizational strategy; and determines how well individual guidance supports the organization's strategy for officer development, its strategic goals, and the supporting objectives.

This project answers the research questions posed and provides recommendations to better align individual actions with the 2040 strategic vision, laying out suggestions for additional research. Acknowledging the significant challenge that NAVSUP has to fundamentally shift the corporate culture, aligning a sizeable community of officers with the strategic goals may assist the organization in orienting toward the year 2040 environment and provide a metric to measure progress toward this transition. The project conclusions are presented in the context of the research questions identified in Chapter I.

B. CONCLUSIONS

1. Primary Research Question

Do U.S. Navy Supply Corps *IYC* playbooks support and align with NAVSUP's *CG13*, *SP*, and *SVS*?

The guidance within the *IYC* (OSCP, 2011a) playbooks aligns with neither *CG13* (NAVSUP, 2013a), *SP* (NAVSUP, 2013b), nor *SVS* (NAVSUP, 2010).

SVS (NAVSUP, 2010) identified core competencies that gave the U.S. Navy Supply Corps a competitive advantage in 2010 and reinforced the enduring development model of "throw them in the deep end, educate them, and mentor them" (p. 103). The core competencies identified then include (1) autonomous, accountable, and resourceful leaders and managers; (2) operational unit support; (3) business acumen; (4) broad skill training and experience; and (5) professional networks (NAVSUP, 2010, p. 115). As mentioned in Chapter II, Collis and Montgomery (2008) argued that "core competence such as these are too often a feel good exercise that no one fails, but instead should be an external assessment of what employees do better than competitors" (p. 146). Comparing two of these competencies with guidance from *IYC* (OSCP, 2011a), no gauge exists within the current performance management system (annual FITREPs, sustained superior performance, accomplishing career milestones) to measure an officer's competency

and suitability for a job concerning business acumen (business literacy and good judgment) or broad skill training and experience. The other four competencies can be measured by the ability to complete work with limited assistance, the success or failure of the operational unit supported by the officer, and the strength of the individual's internal and external network.

Additionally, *SVS* defined future skill sets needed to position the U.S. Navy Supply Corps for success across the range of environments identified in four alternative futures (NAVSUP, 2010, pp. 112–115). "Strategic segmentation" (NAVSUP, 2010, pp. 114–115) was used in *SVS* to identify the required core competencies; a visual representation of this segmentation is displayed in Figure 10. As displayed by the color coded segments, descriptors within the yellow highlighted cells are unclear. In the support columns, two support functions are defined as "logistics management services." In the services group (represented by rows), specialized logistics services is defined as "focused support." Clarity as to how these definitions compare and contrast with each other is not assessed or commented upon here. However, future core competencies may be traced to these broadly defined strategic segments.

Figure 10. Strategic Segmentation Table
(Adapted from NAVSUP, 2010, pp. 114–115)

The 12 future core competencies resulting from strategic segmentation, in priority order, are as follows: (1) knowledge management, (2) responsive processes, (3) extended professional networks, (4) Joint/Combined operational support, (5) environmental consciousness/green operations, (6) tech-savvy people, (7) interoperability, (8) regional/cultural expertise, (9) operations management, (10) partnering/alliances, (11) redundant systems/processes, and (12) life-cycle management. Where each of these lies within the strategic segmentation table and

the degree of overlap between these segments is unknown; this location and degree of overlap is of no concern to this study.

What is relevant concerns the competencies that fit within themes identified in Chapter IV. Knowledge management, environmental consciousness/green operations, tech savviness, operations management, systems/processes, and life-cycle management (1) all require competency, (2) can be developed and maintained through affiliation with professional associations or societies, and (3) in many cases, have established and recognized credentialing programs associated with them (operations management and the Certified Supply Chain Professional© from the Association for Operations Management [APICS], for example). The other skill sets—(2), (3), (4), (7), (8), and (10) in the previous paragraph—are harder to measure but can be incentivized through strategic communications outlets, as can the others. Three of the top five core competencies cannot be easily measured (the 12 competencies are ranked according to importance in *SVS* [NAVSUP, 2010]), and this poses a problem if the organization claims achievement of the KSACs required for validation of core competencies without having the metrics to substantiate such a claim. The quantifiable skill sets, however, can be easily assessed.

Comparing *IYC* guidance with the KSACs needed for future core competencies, as identified in *SVS* (NAVSUP, 2010), little incentive exists for today's junior officers to pursue the credentials required for achieving and validating the expertise and competency sought through strategic goals. An organization can claim to have such competencies. However, lacking the personnel possessing current KSACs and supporting credentials (e.g., appropriately meshed qualifications, education, and certifications validated to a standard) relevant to the core competency and functional area of work being performed, such a claim goes unsubstantiated. As Collis and Montgomery (2008) concluded, such a claim is only a feel-good statement for the organization.

SP (NAVSUP, 2013b) identified four goals to achieve during its four-year time frame: (a) a world-class workplace; (b) unity of effort; (c) effective, efficient performance; and (d) data-driven decision-making, all of which relate to the three themes identified in Chapter IV—functional competency, credentials, and affiliation. The world-class workplace goal concerns building and maintaining an environment of sound judgment and integrity as well as developing and retaining a diverse, innovative, and professional workforce (NAVSUP, 2014b). The unity of effort goal encompasses partnering with internal and external stakeholders along with improvement of services and validation of logistical and financial processes, among others (NAVSUP, 2014b). The effective, efficient performance goal suggests reviewing contracting processes, assessing abilities to support the U.S. Navy's requirements, and driving cost out of business lines (NAVSUP, 2014b). The last

goal, data-driven decision-making, identifies cost reduction across the U.S. Navy supply chains and developing enterprise-level metrics (NAVSUP, 2014b). Common themes throughout all of these goals include the need for functional competency and external affiliation.

CG/14 (NAVSUP, 2014b) guides the U.S. Navy Supply Corps to be a proactive partner within the Joint Naval Support Network, described as a conglomerate of commercial, government (not only military), and international organizations. The guidance addresses a focus area to support a quality of work that includes ensuring that Supply Corps officers have the materials, tools, and training needed to be successful in their jobs (NAVSUP, 2014b). It also identifies a focus of attracting, developing, and retaining a diverse, innovative, and professional workforce (NAVSUP, 2014a). Strategic Objective 2.4 seeks to ensure that Supply Corps professionals have the necessary expertise to provide solutions for task execution in jobs at external organizations (NAVSUP, 2014b). Again, common themes throughout the current year's guidance are functional competency and external affiliation.

CG13 (NAVSUP, 2013a), in Strategic Objective 1.3, highlights the need to identify skill sets and professional certifications but does so in a very broad and general sense. It does specify, as an example, the CDFM. It is assumed that the acronym is referring to the Certified Defense Financial Manager certification; if so, that is a great start to advertise the need to pursue and attain professional certifications. In the same example, DAWIA certifications are also mentioned. The organization must recognize the significant difference existing between occupational certifications and professional certifications. DAWIA certifications require no continuing education or maintenance, and therefore, these credentials are of the one-time, check-the-box variety (similar to all others required in the current performance management system and development model). Specifics concerning professional certifications and skill sets did not carry over into the *CG/14* message, and there exists little, if any, detail concerning the outcomes of Strategic Objective 1.3 efforts during 2013. Thus, officers have little incentive to pursue the CDFM or any other professional certification for the organization's benefit, and the officer corps still lacks the necessary detail to pursue and achieve validated KSACs beneficial to the organization's strategic initiatives. As a result, the officer corps must revert to following the only other available guidance: *IYC*.

IYC playbooks highlight what officers must do to increase their chance for selection to the next higher rank, attain increased authority, and be given more responsibility. The guidance contained within these playbooks focuses on promotion within the organization and implicitly speaks to officers' charting their own paths to

achieve success. Scant detail aligns individual efforts with the organization's strategic goals or the strategic vision for officers in the year 2040.

2. Supporting Research Questions

How does *IYC* guidance contribute to strategic goals?

IYC guidance provides a pathway for officers to advance in rank but not necessarily one that significantly contributes to strategic initiatives. This equates to doing the right things for promotion purposes—but not necessarily right as measured by industry standards or Joint Naval Support Network partners. The playbooks lay out superbly what officers must do to be selected during promotion boards, described in the document as "success" (OSCP, 2011a). The guidance incorporates everything an officer must do in today's U.S. Navy Supply Corps to advance in rank, including the following:

a. Functional Competency

- successful tours of duty in tactical and operational commands— achieving sustained superior performance in every assignment

b. Credentialing

- achieve warfare qualifications (when the opportunity exists)

- maintain the service record by reflecting job assignments with NOBCs/AQDs, documenting experience (doing the right things)

- achieve numerous academic credentials (education)

- achieve joint qualification

- complete internships and Training with Industry (TWI) externships

c. Affiliation

- achieve DAWIA certifications; acquisition corps membership

- work for senior Supply Corps officers—have fitness reports (FITREPS) signed by admirals

- network through seniors, peers, and the Supply Corps Association chapters through volunteer activities—attend wardroom functions, coordinate formal social events, and participate in community outreach

The TWI externship opportunities are of particular interest. *SVS* (NAVSUP, 2010) states, "The Supply Corps uses [TWI externships] to develop contacts with private sector companies to learn the latest commercial methods and to improve logistics business practices" (p. 107). The discussion goes on to say that the externship program processes could be improved, since no clear mechanism exists

for externship officers to transfer their knowledge to the largest possible audience in the U.S. Navy Supply Corps. The organization, in 2010, wasn't receiving a return on its investment from externships because it tried to capture commercial best practices through an extremely small portion of its officers; four positions per year, at one year in length, for an approximate total of 1,300 lieutenants and lieutenant commanders equates to three tenths of a percent of the officer corps who are introduced to industry methods or practices.

Thus, if a U.S. Navy Supply Corps officer achieves the right credentials, successfully affiliates himself internally (e.g., builds a strong Supply Corps network), and achieves sustained superior performance, the officer is likely to be promoted, and in doing so, succeed in the organization's view: advance to higher ranks, receive increased responsibility, and be given greater authority, with or without the functional competency that should be a prerequisite for the majority, not a minority, of officers. Hence, employee engagement and performance management are focused toward individual promotion exclusively and lack any substantial, direct link (line of sight) with organizational strategy.

To what degree are the activities outlined in *IYC* guidance aligned with strategic objectives?

This research suggests that *IYC* guidance activities, and the performance management system incentivizing those activities, are weakly aligned with the organization's strategic objectives. This is due in part to its promotion-centric milestones that are unrelated to functional competency development and maintenance. Additionally, little mention of formal affiliation with external organizations is made within *IYC* playbooks.

1. Functional Competency

Functional competency is not a metric within *IYC* career milestones for advancement. The previously mentioned *IYC* activities concern credentials that are mostly unrelated to achievement of functional competency.

2. Credentials

The credentials required by *IYC* guidance for an officer maintaining promotion eligibility align with those outlined in promotion selection board guidance. The Supply Corps Career Progression model, shown in Figure 11, and Community Values, shown in Figure 12, display the range of preferred credentials and achievements desired for U.S. Navy Supply Corps officers during fiscal year 2015 selection boards held during calendar year 2014. These two figures appear in the CNO-approved active-duty staff corps promotion selection board brief.

Supply Corps
Career Progression

Career Path

J.O. BASIC TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENT & LEADERSHIP	ADVANCED TECHNICAL PROFICIENCY & LEADERSHIP	SENIOR OFFICER DEVELOPMENT & LEADERSHIP

ADMIN BOARD INTERNSHIP
ADMIN BOARD CIVINS (810/811)
ADMIN BOARD TRAINING W/ INDUSTRY (TWI)
ADMIN BOARD O5 OP/ COMMAND
ADMIN BOARD O6 COMMAND

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20 22 24 26 28

Typical Billets

OCS BQC | Operational Tour | Shore/ Internship | Operational 2nd Tour | Joint /OPLOG/Acquisition/Supply Chain/TWI or O4 Operational Tour | O5 Operational or Command Tour Joint/OPLOG/Acquisition Supply Chain/Policy | Command Tour Echelon II or III Policy or Program Manager

Warfare Qualification | DAWIA I & II/SC Masters Program/JPME I | DAWIA III/Sr Svc College/JPME II/JQO | ETP

3100 Principal Lines of Operation with Subspecialty & AQD Alignment

OPERATIONAL LOGISTICS		SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT		ACQUISITION MANAGEMENT		SUBSPEC SUFFIXES	
1304	Trans Logistics Mgt	1301	Supply Distribution Mgt	1306	Acq/Contract Mgt	P/G	Masters Degree
1307	Petroleum Mgt	1302	Supply Chain Mgt	3110	Financial Mgt	Q	Masters & experience
3211	Ops Research Analysis	1309	Logistics IT	APM	Acq Corps (ACQ FULL QUAL)	S	18 month experience
3212	Ops Research Logistics	6201	Info Systems & Tech		IA/GSA AQD	R	Multiple experience
JP1/2/3	Op Planning (OPERATIONAL P)		OPERATIONAL AQD	918	>120 days (SC JNTTADTOPS)	T	Masters Incomplete
QK1	Spec War (NSW NON-SEA)	928	1 Non-Trad OP Tour (ASGN NCONV)	919	>240 days (SC 2JNTTADTOP)		
920	Trans Mgt (SC TRNMGT)	929	2 Non-Trad OP Tours (COMP2 NCONV)				

Figure 11. The Supply Corps Career Progression Model
(NPC, n.d., p. 12)

Supply Corps
Community Values

- Valued achievements prior to LIEUTENANT COMMANDER
  - Warfare qualification
  - Afloat DH tour (encouraged)
  - Two sea tours; or
  - Combination of sea tour & non-traditional operational tours
    - Identified by AQD 928 (ASGN NCONV) – one non-traditional expeditionary tour
    - Identified by AQD 929 (COMP2 NCONV) – two non-traditional expeditionary tours
- Valued achievements prior to COMMANDER
  - Master's degree associated with Supply Corps lines of operation (strongly encouraged)
  - Proven performer in at least one line of operation
  - Challenging shore tour, e.g. Weapon Systems Support, TYCOM, SYSCOM, Fleet Logistics Center, HQ/OPNAV, and their Joint or DLA equivalent
- Valued achievements prior to CAPTAIN
  - Proven ability to lead and direct people and organizations in tough, highly visible and challenging environments
  - Experience in multiple lines of operation (strongly encouraged)
  - O5 Operational tour or Command tour (strongly encouraged)
  - Joint Qualified Officer (JQO) or Acquisition Corps membership (strongly encouraged)

Figure 12. The Supply Corps Community Values
(NPC, n.d., p. 13)

Once these credentials are achieved, however, no incentive exists to maintain the KSAC level acquired at the time the credential was earned. For example, within *valued achievements* prior to achieving commander in Figure 12, a master's degree associated with a line of operation is strongly encouraged. If the officer achieves a degree in operations research, yet isn't immediately assigned to a job requiring the KSACs acquired during an operations research educational experience, those KSACs may quickly fade and go unused by the organization. Community use rates can inform leadership about how often such circumstances occur. If the officer enters a job requiring operations research KSACs years later, the learning curve will most likely be steep; mistakes could be common during half or more of a three-year tour. As the officer reacquaints himself with the KSACs required of an operations analysis professional, valuable application time is being lost, and mistakes could be hindering efficiency. Similar scenarios can span the assortment of relevant functional categories within each line of operation. Alternatively, if the officer does enter an operations analysis job immediately, it may likely benefit both parties for the officer to achieve, and maintain, analytics certification with an external professional organization.

Concerning the AQD or NOBC, this credential only documents the completion of a job within a specific functional area. Aside from administrative marks in the FITREPs, no measure gauges how well the officer performed the function while in that job. Another valued achievement for promotion to commander is being a "proven performer in at least one line of operation" (NPC, n.d.). This measure resembles that of sustained superior performance in that there isn't a true measure of competency for performing well within that line of operation or a functional subcategory within it.

3. Affiliation

IYC guidance mentions external organizations a handful of times within the *It's Your Experience* playbook. The following external organizations are noted briefly as locations for further information within a few of the U.S. Navy Supply Corps lines of operation, which follow each entity in parentheses:

- American Society of Military Comptrollers and its Certified Defense Financial Manager certification (acquisition management),

- National Contract Management Association (acquisition management and supply chain management),

- Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences (INFORMS; operational logistics and supply chain management),

- Military Applications Society (operational logistics and supply chain management),

- Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals (supply chain management), and

- Supply Chain Council (supply chain management).

Formal affiliation with any of these organizations is explicitly incentivized within neither the *It's Your Experience* playbook, the career milestones in *It's Your Career* (see Figure 9), nor the associated development model. Concerning an officer's selection for assignment or promotion, affiliation with these external groups isn't advertised, acknowledged, or rewarded. Hence, the value of pursuing professional certifications administered while working within the U.S. Navy Supply Corps is low for a promotion-focused officer. A survey of a wider group of U.S. Navy Supply Corps officers may validate this argument, or refute it.

Advertising organizations such as these for further information within applicable functional areas is a good start for the organization; however, additional guidance should be provided to increase employee engagement with these external organizations and, in turn, with the organization's strategy. Similarly, by focusing internally on Navy Supply Corps Association chapters and rewarding significant networking with other Supply Corps officers, little, if any, progress is being made by the officer corps concerning affiliation with Joint Naval Support Network partners or beneficial external organizations, and therefore, the officer corps' contribution to external affiliation is likely minimal.

How does *IYC* motivate officers to pursue KSACs that support a fundamental shift in corporate culture being sought through the strategic goals and supporting objectives?

IYC engages the organization's officer corps to pursue promotion within the established performance management system, and promotion is not linked to KSACs achieved and maintained for application on the job. Career guidance neglects to incentivize individual officers to engage in actions that support near-, mid-, or long-term strategic initiatives. The fundamental shift sought in corporate culture is unachievable with the current officer development model and its performance management system.

In 2014, advancement eligibility is attained by achieving milestones unrelated to attaining and maintaining functional competency. By achieving credentials laid out in the *IYC* guidance and career milestones (see Figure 9), officers are focused upon individual career advancement, not on organizational improvement through strategic goals. The organization's valued achievements are explicitly outlined by the Secretary of the Navy's guidance for promotion board members' use during the selection process. The desired attributes in Figures 11 and 12 are not useful metrics for measuring individual development within functional lines of operation, nor are

they useful for measuring progress made toward the organization's strategic goals or long-term vision concerning competency attainment for increasing the likelihood for achievement of the strategy—effective, efficient performance through a professional workforce using sound judgment to drive costs out of business lines.

IYC playbook guidance heavily emphasizes internal networking and affiliation with Supply Corps officers through Navy Supply Corps Association chapters. None of these attributes monitor an individual's competency in the functional areas that strategy suggests officers need to become experts within the organization. Thus, promotion eligibility milestones (credentialing requirements and experience) combined with internal affiliation does not link to the organization's strategic goals. Strategy seeks the development of a functionally competent corps of proficient officers able to perform in functionally defined jobs within the lines of operation.

Strategic goals provide direction for the Supply Corps officers to accomplish their work more effectively and efficiently in a world-class workplace through unity of effort and data-driven decision-making. Lacking incentive via career milestones and the development model, U.S. Navy Supply Corps officers must concern themselves with doing the right things, as laid out in the *IYC* playbooks, since that guidance is the source for promotion eligibility requirements. Achieving and demonstrating functional competency in order to implement the desired change is not rewarded with promotion, and therefore, employees have no incentive to engage themselves with their organization's strategic goals or long-term vision.

What's missing from *IYC* guidance are the means by which to achieve sustained superior performance when consumed by the first element in the enduring development model—being thrown in the deep end—from assignment to assignment, especially during the early years as a junior officer. Functional competencies for officers are unmeasured, and this may be a cause of the reactionary environment that officers often find themselves working in. Lacking competency validation within the performance management system or continued use and maintenance of KSACs, the fundamental shift in corporate culture will likely not happen, and the organization's strategic vision may not be realized as a result. It's questionable as to whether that vision contains measurable attributes in 2014 concerning U.S. Navy Supply Corps contributions to it.

NAVSUP's strategic publications allude to building competencies, developing skills, and maintaining capabilities but do not specify exactly what competencies, skills, or abilities individuals must pursue and obtain to assist the organization in reaching strategic goals. How beneficial *IYC* is, as currently written, to the community's strategic pursuits or the individual's professional development is questionable. Consideration of the forthcoming modifications to the military's

retirement system along with the knowledge economy of the future must be accounted for in career milestones and the development model.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

Align the two document groups by modifying the organization's performance management system for officers and the officer development model to include incentivizing use of—and continuing education within—industry-standardized professional certification programs beneficial to the organization and the individual. Industry-based credentialing is highly relevant to functional development within the many lines of operation that U.S. Navy Supply Corps officers frequently work. The possible certification programs span the functional areas and the lines of operation in which these areas exist.

1. Functional Competency

As the literature suggests, employees with functional competency increase their probability for performing well in a job. It also says that in order for employees to engage with strategic initiatives, a line of sight must exist between the employee and the strategy. That link exists in the job. To increase the probability of success, the employee must have the appropriate level of KSACs, and these KSACs must be validated by some standard in order to offer legitimacy to any claim of functional competency. Industry provides certification programs that standardize the measurement of competency across the entire spectrum of functional assignments in which U.S. Navy Supply Corps officers typically work today as well as those across the realm of potential future environments.

2. Credentials

During the Supply Corps Officer Basic Course, introduce the importance of affiliation with external organizations through professional certification programs that offer functional-area KSAC validation. Additionally, incentivize achieving and maintaining these credentials for promotion purposes and reward officers for competency within functional areas beneficial to NAVSUP and the U.S. Navy Supply Corps. This can include the professional areas of knowledge management (the Knowledge Management Professional Society offers the Certified Knowledge Manager certification) and operations management (APICS Certified in Production and Inventory Management), as identified for the year 2040, or more urgent areas highlighted in today's fiscal environment, such as contract management (Certified Professional Contracts Manager, Certified Federal Contracts Manager, or Certified Commercial Contracts Manager) and financial management (the CDFM), as mentioned in recent strategic messages. Numerous other functional-area certifications exist in industry concerning safety, training and development,

warehousing, energy management, general management, environmental certifications, analytics certifications, services management, and project management. In particular, the Project Management Institute offers the Project Management Professional certification program that has well-established curriculums and certification levels directly applicable to the work that Supply Corps officers frequently perform. With the amount of change discussed in strategic guidance, having a corps with validated project management KSACs, as well as other functional-area KSACs, could benefit the Supply Corps officer's service to Joint Naval Support Network partners as well as the NAVSUP enterprise as the change initiatives are pursued via large- and small-scale projects.

However, without incentives to achieve and maintain credentials important to strategy, officers will likely not devote the monetary resources or effort to achieve professional certifications.

3. Affiliation

As alluded to in the previous section, besides focusing on internal networking, stress the importance of external networking. Such a formal affiliation with professional organizations, associations, and societies has multiple benefits for the organization and the individual.

If NAVSUP identifies and incentivizes the relevant professional certifications and the appropriate external organizations for its officers to affiliate with, officers who do so may then contribute to positioning the organization as the premier defense logistics entity within the joint environment of 2040. Such credentials can provide a metric to gauge (1) officer competencies across the spectrum of functional-area expertise sought by the organization and (2) establish and maintain KSACs as officers move between assignments. For example, an officer who attains the Certified in Production and Inventory Management credential and maintains affiliation with APICS, is well suited to operate effectively in an inventory management environment within the supply chain management line of operation by incorporating standard techniques used by industry.

Additionally, in doing so, the officer is validating his KSACs and adding to his portfolio an industry-standardized credential that industry organizations trust. Without such a credential, employees of partners comprising the Joint Naval Support Network may be hesitant to, for example, entertain a U.S. Navy Supply Corps officer's inputs in solving an operations management problem in a joint environment. Referencing the introductory paragraph of this project report, the MSC's declining U.S. Navy Supply Corps officer services, as proposed in the 1989 study, demonstrates a similar hesitation by one external organization a quarter-century

ago. Changing the competency validation method is one way to inspire greater trust.

4.   Additional Benefits

Such an external affiliation does something more for the individual officer. Since very few U.S. Navy Supply Corps officers will ever achieve the rank of captain (O6), equipping themselves with industry-recognized credentials improves their employability in any economic environment, developing the individual's career, not just the career officer's career. Lacking such credentials, employees have no way to compare themselves with their peers within any functional area, inside or outside of government. Industry uses standard KSAC validation through credentialing programs to establish competency requirements for potential employees. Additionally, using credentialing programs is not foreign to the U.S. Navy; the NAVY Credentialing Opportunities Online (COOL) list for U.S. Navy Supply Corps officers contains the following industry recognized, national-level certifications, as of April 2014:

- Certified Commercial Contracts Manager (CCCM)
- Certified Federal Contracts Manager (CFCM)
- Certified Professional Contracts Manager (CPCM)
- Certified Professional Public Buyer (CPPB)
- Certified Professional Purchasing Manager (CPPM)
- Certified Purchasing Professional (CPP)
- Certified in Transportation and Logistics (CTL)
- Certified Professional in Supply Management (CPSM)
- Certified Supply Chain Professional (CSCP)

In a competitive environment, when lacking proof of competency, claims of competency go unsubstantiated. U.S. Navy Supply Corps officers must be able to substantiate their suitability for jobs in the joint environment. Professional certifications are one way to do just that, and they help the organization to achieve its strategy while also developing their individual value proposition during military employment and applying those validated KSACs to their military assignments. In doing so, officers are incentivized to validate and maintain KSACs during every job they undertake while serving in the U.S. Navy.

D. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This report has established a foundation from which further research on the U.S. Navy Supply Corps officer development model and its relationship to the NAVSUP strategic initiatives can be performed.

Denisi and Smith (2014) recommended more research looking at different industries and human resources practices. Additional study of U.S. Navy Supply Corps practices in human resources as they relate to *SVS* may be beneficial to firm-level performance literature. *SVS*, *SP*, and *CG* provide such an opportunity from a sub organization within the federal government. Denisi and Smith (2014) also lobbied for "a need for future research to determine if contextual factors (culture, industry, firm size, employees level within the organization) have any appreciable effect on the ways to manage performance in order to improve firm performance" (p. 162).

The following topics are presented for further inquiry:

1. What are the beneficial industry certification bodies (e.g., organizations, associations, societies) for the U.S. Navy Supply Corps and NAVSUP as they relate to the Supply Corps' position and value proposition in the Joint Naval Support Network and its future core competencies as identified in *SVS*? The following potential list of functional areas resulted from the researcher's findings. These areas are applicable to the numerous work environments that typical Supply Corps officers might find themselves in throughout a five-, 15-, or 30-year stay with the U.S. Navy Supply Corps.

- resource management
- project management
- operations management
- supply chain management
- customer satisfaction
- customer services

- financial management
- contracting management
- analytics
- general management
- energy management
- environmental management

- quality assurance
- continuous process improvement
- information systems management
- knowledge management
- safety
- regulations management

2. Assess NAVSUP strategic communications messages (e.g., *CG13*, *SP*, U.S. Navy Supply Corps flashes, Navy Supply Corps Newsletter highlights, monthly Office of Personnel updates) to determine how well the messages reinforce the organization's strategic initiatives. As a tangent to this research, the researcher measured the frequency of the Flash from the Chief message topics from January 2003 to April 2014. The major messages are flag officer move announcements (10.61%), flag officer/captain promotion announcements (6.53%), Supply Corps internship opportunities and selection results (7.96%), Sea/Operational command ashore board notices and results (5.71%), postgraduate school advertisements and screenings (4.29%), Batchelder Award advertisements and results (2.86%), TWI externship advertisements and selection results (2.86%), Supply Corps birthday messages (2.86%), senior leadership advisory council advertisements (2.04%), and female Supply Corps submarine opportunities (1.63%—eight messages in four years), while messages concerning topics such as ethics and strategic guidance received 2.86% combined and spread out over six years.

The common theme with the majority of these topics is that each relates directly to a very small percentage of the officer corps population. Additional study is possible concerning communication of the organizational strategy to the officers through this and other publications. Included with the March 2014 OP Monthly Report, the March 2014 Eye on Ethics from the Department of the Navy provided two examples of questionable decisions—the exact kind of stories useful for communicating ethics awareness. This was the researcher's first time seeing a message such as this via a NAVSUP strategic messaging system, and it is significant and representative of highlighting an important issue through regular communications channels.

Considering the major messages relayed over the past decade through the Flash from the Chief notices, topics concerning the functional area of safety are absent from discussion. The work environments that most Supply Corps officers typically find themselves operating in require them to fill the role of safety observer, necessitating a need to become competent and maintain proficiency in safety duties of various types. There is little, if any, discussion in the community about safety practices, examples of failure, or praise for success.

A similar analysis can be performed on all NAVSUP strategic communications, and a possible framework to apply is Richard Rumelt's construct, The Perils of Bad Strategy.

3. Could the balanced scorecard be applied to the performance management and measurement system for incentivizing pursuing and maintaining relevant professional certifications by Supply Corps officers?

4. Mid-level officers (the admirals in 10–20 years) continue research for thesis and capstone projects to analytically assess the progress of NAVSUP toward its strategic goals and its vision for Supply Corps officers.

5. Conduct more frequent Supply Corps officer surveys concerning officer development and organizational strategy; distribute the survey results to the Supply Corps at all ranks and in all assignments throughout the organization.

E.   SUMMARY

It is hoped that this research will encourage the studies needed to achieve a fundamental shift in the corporate culture, one moving us away from a reactive business model supported by the current personnel management practices to one that is more "proactive, nuanced, and strategic" (NAVSUP, 2013b) using the performance management and employee engagement constructs discussed in the literature review and applied in the conclusions.

Aligning *IYC* with *SVS* through the strategic guidance can inform, incentivize, and empower individual officers at all ranks to take actions that contribute to NAVSUP strategic goals. This alignment may be achieved by employing measurement tools currently missing for strategic guidance. Modifications to the career development model, by incorporating easily measurable requirements such as credentialing through professional certification programs, can correct the misalignment.

By identifying complementary KSACs required for professional logisticians, readily available mechanisms from professional organizations, associations, and societies can introduce standards and provide concrete metrics for U.S. Navy Supply Corps officer development. Simultaneously, measures for how well the organization is achieving specific strategic objectives can also become available to the organization's leadership and its community of officers. These metrics can become a data point for measuring strategic progress, adjusting strategic guidance, and developing individuals for sustained superior performance throughout a range of assignments during military service and beyond.

Incentivizing the individual pursuit of professional certification via industry-recognized programs through external organizations can elevate the prospects for the U.S. Navy Supply Corps across the range of possible future environments. Doing so can also contribute to the more urgent need for competency, professionalism, and legitimacy upon arrival to a new job within the numerous functional areas that exist. The supporting professional certifications, if explicitly identified by the organization, can assist in measuring progress toward strategic initiatives—developing professional employees that achieve and maintain the KSACs needed for future core competencies while also validating the organization's claimed core competencies of today. Achieving this human capital state increases the likelihood for gaining efficiency, improving effectiveness, refining business processes, and fundamentally changing the corporate culture.

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